

# THE LIVING AGE

*Founded by E. Littell*

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## The World Over

PRESENT CONDITIONS in Germany foreshadow some of the consequences of America's banking moratorium. Between 1918 and 1924 the German mark was inflated out of existence. In July 1931 one of the biggest banks in the country failed and gold exports have been forbidden ever since. No such powerful influences now favor the complete inflation of the American dollar as favored the complete inflation of the German mark after the War, but on the other hand the American banking crisis of 1933 is more severe than the corresponding German crisis of 1931. A brief review of post-war German history should therefore throw some light on the future of the United States as well as on the Germany of to-day.

Ten years ago the East Prussian landowners recovered possession of their estates by paying off their mortgages in a worthless inflated currency. At the same time Hugo Stinnes took advantage of the same inflation to organize enormous trusts. All the big German industrialists improved and rationalized their plants, factory employment boomed, and the holders of common stocks flourished. The working class, organized into strong trade unions, succeeded in keeping its wages almost abreast of prices. The post-war German inflation therefore came down hardest on the holders of fixed-interest-bearing securities, savings-bank accounts, and mortgages. Hitler's first followers were the middle-class victims of this inflation, whose ranks have lately been swollen by victims

of the general depression that culminated in the banking crisis of July 1931—just as the American depression has culminated in the March moratorium. Communism, too, drawing its followers from the ranks of the unorganized workers and the unemployed, grew steadily in Germany until a month ago.

In so far as any parallels can be discovered between the present condition of Germany and the future condition of the United States, they would seem to be closest in respect to the middle classes of the two countries. The American farmer, like the East Prussian *Junker*, demands a cheaper currency so that he can pay off his mortgage. The American industrialist, like the German, would welcome an inflation that would lighten his crushing burden of fixed-interest charges. But the American farmer, owning his own land, will not suffer from inflation as much as the landless German peasant did, whereas the American industrial worker, lacking the organization that exists in Germany, will probably suffer more. The United States has no labor movement comparable to the Socialist trade unions in Germany—which leaves the field open for the Communists, the I. W. W., or any other radical group. The inflation—or at any rate the devaluation—of the dollar which is on its way in the United States will therefore correspond to the inflation of the German mark only as far as the middle class is concerned, because that class suffers in exact proportion to the rate of inflation, whereas the results of inflation on industrial workers and farmers depend partly on other factors.

Already some ten thousand bank failures have created widespread unrest in the American middle class. The basis for a movement similar to Hitler's is laid. Up to now these bank failures have been scattered and have been chiefly confined to rural districts; the big insurance companies and savings banks have held firm. But the impending inflation and the results of the national banking moratorium will affect precisely the same element that lined up behind Hitler in Germany after the inflation there. How violent its demands will be here depends on the degree of inflation, and we do not suggest that American Fascism will be as extreme as German Fascism.

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WE REFERRED some months ago to the revolutionary implications of President Roosevelt's election. It is now clear that Hitler drew his enormous mass support in the March elections from the same discontented elements in all classes that voted for Roosevelt over here last November. It was not so much that Hitler offered a 'new deal'—the Communists and other parties offered that in both countries; it was that any vote not cast for Hitler would have perpetuated the previous deadlock, just as any vote not cast for Roosevelt would have maintained

Hoover in office and would have perpetuated the deadlock between the White House and Congress. Obviously Mr. Roosevelt will not play the demagogue as Hitler did—and even Hitler, now that he has achieved power, has abandoned nearly all of his preëlection slogans. Meanwhile, in both countries masses of discontented citizens will look elsewhere if conditions continue to go from bad to worse under the new leadership.

Just one point more. The past fourteen years in Germany have witnessed a rapid extension of state authority until now the Government, which always controlled the railways, virtually controls the banks and also provides large subsidies to shipping, heavy industry, and agriculture. In the United States the Federal Government has lately entered the field of business at accelerating speed—notably in the form of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The very name of Hitler's party—National Socialist—defines the course that Germany must continue to follow. There are many reasons to believe that the United States is headed in the same direction.

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THE NEW HITLER CABINET rests on a shaky tripod. A majority of its members belong to Hugenberg's Nationalist Party and represent the interests of the feudal landowners of East Prussia and the Rhineland industrialists. Hitler drew his support only from the industrialists, but he has behind him an amorphous mass of discontented voters who were attracted by his pseudo-revolutionary slogans. The immediate question in Germany is whether the alliance between the landowners and the industrialists will give way before Hitler's mass movement crumbles. Brüning was forced out of office last May because he threatened to break up the big East Prussian estates, and Schleicher's fall was also contrived by intriguing *Junkers*. The farm problem in Germany has long been acute, and half a billion marks have been poured into the *Osthilfe*, a special fund for the relief of East Prussian agriculture. Tariffs to protect German farm products have been raised so high that food prices in Germany are twenty per cent above the world level. Thus not only is agriculture the weakest link in the economic chain but its interests run counter to the interests of industry, which has been handicapped by the comparatively high cost of the workers' food as well as by direct taxation for the relief of unprofitable farming ventures. Unless an unpredictable general strike should occur within a month or two, the next development in Germany will probably be the defeat of the feudal landowners of East Prussia at the hands of the Rhineland industrialists.

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KENDALL BANNING, of the *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, has written to us suggesting that we should be rendering a real public service if we indicated "what the financiers and legislators of this country can learn

and, indeed, must learn from the experience of foreign nations in rearing a financial structure that is sound.' As Mr. Banning points out, some six thousand banks in the United States have failed during the past three years, while, in the same period, there has not been a single bank failure in Great Britain or Canada. A leading editorial in the London *Statist* sums up the American situation in three sentences:—

Sweeping changes in the system are clearly required, and it may be taken that in the not far distant future legislation will be enacted with this object. The present multiplicity of small banks must be remedied. A danger even in normal times, it is a certain national peril in times of depression.

The New York correspondent of the same paper applauds a move by the Corn Exchange Bank of New York as a step in the right direction:—

The decision of the Corn Exchange Bank in New York to publish its investment holdings is of epoch-making importance. It will force action, voluntarily or by stress of legislation, on the part of all the other banking companies in the country of major rank. The holdings of the bank are excellent in character, in the main. All valuations are as of December 31, 1932; and bonds on which defaults have occurred have been listed at one dollar. We are coming to a time when publicity of banking operations will be as complete as one can imagine—whether or not that be desirable.

Here is the way the *Statist* describes our present banking structure:—

Banks in the United States, though reduced by over 9,000 since 1925 and by about 6,000 since the middle of 1929—mainly through insolvencies—still number approximately 19,000, with average capital funds of only about 400,000 dollars and average deposits of 2,500,000 dollars. Many are not properly banks at all but simply outgrowths of real estate and investment houses. Still fewer were conducted on really sound principles, having been loaded up with second-grade securities, which, when the crisis developed, could be realized only at a heavy loss—and the greater the volume of selling the greater, of course, the depreciation—while their advances consisted to an undue extent of loans against an even more speculative grade of investment, which, the customer's margin of cover having run off, had similarly to be liquidated at a heavy sacrifice.

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SO MUCH for the defects of the American system. Let us now turn to the advantages of the British. In England six big banks with branches in all parts of the country dominate the field. Their dividend payments in 1932 remained almost exactly what they were in 1931 and profits averaged about fifteen per cent in both years. Compulsory membership in the Federal Reserve System would be the very least that the United States could do toward approaching the British system, and Carter Glass's branch-banking bill would at least represent progress in the British direction. Winthrop Aldrich's suggestion to divorce security selling from banking is also in line with British practice. But it was no more possible for an expanding, self-sufficient national area like the

United States to develop a banking system like England's than it was for the bankers who created that system to possess the wisdom and experience of British bankers. Now that the end of America's era of expansion has arrived, the least that our banking system can do is to take over from England the centralized control that a mature society requires and to abandon all practices peculiar to a different stage of development, as well as the leaders responsible for them.

NO COUNTRY has followed the efforts of America to defend the gold standard with such solicitude as England. The immediate occasion of this concern is that the devaluation of the dollar and the revaluation of the pound would transpose the positions of Britain and America at any international conference dealing with world trade and international currency problems. Prior to March 4, England enjoyed a 30 per cent advantage over the United States in respect to export trade because the pound had declined by that amount. It now seems possible that one of the chief American aims at the debt negotiations may be accomplished in advance and that the pound and the dollar will bear the same relationship to each other that they did before England went off the gold standard. Since foreign trade is more important to England than to the United States, England's loss is greater than America's gain, and the following passage from the leading editorial in the London *Statist* of February 18 has a prophetic ring:—

The last few weeks have shown that there may spring up a movement toward competition in depreciating the external value of currencies off gold. If the absence of an international standard is an impediment to world trade competition, currency depreciation is a process that may deliver its death blow; and no more unhealthy symptom of the international financial chaos than this could be experienced. At the same time the continued fall in gold prices gives a stimulus to such action. It also further weakens the position of the gold-standard countries. Recent evidence of this in the United States is seen in the closing of the Michigan banks for a week, after similar but less important steps had been taken elsewhere. The fear that a new outbreak of bank failures is imminent in the United States on top of the unbalanced budget and the large-scale unemployment are facts which, it must be frankly faced, may ultimately endanger the existence of the gold standard in the United States. Should a renewal of hoarding cause America to suspend gold payments, the final catastrophe in world trade would be reached—a catastrophe that would at the same time sweep away whatever advantages we derive from a depreciated pound.

One week before the same paper commented as follows in the same vein:—

What gives us our 'independence' is not so much the fact that we are free of gold as the fact that the pound is depreciated to about 30 per cent of its gold value. This would readily be appreciated if the pound rose to near its old parity

without being tied to the international standard. In normal circumstances it is most unlikely to do so, but the deterioration of conditions in the United States and France may set up capital movements that could seriously affect our 'independence.' Moreover, the fluctuations of the pound, not to mention currency depreciation abroad, can easily upset the tariff system on which we are now relying to maintain the volume of internal trade. Further, the fact that, in spite of the tariff and sterling depreciation, wages and raw-material prices have not been forced up is due to the purely fortuitous fact that gold prices have continued to fall. If we do not wish to find our position of 'independence' reversed, we must obviously seek to find an international agreement as to currency and prices.

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NO SOONER had the Committee of Nineteen of the League of Nations specified Japan as the aggressor and China as the victim in the Far Eastern war than the British House of Commons voted to forbid the shipment of munitions to Japan and China alike. Here, at any rate, is evidence that the 'secret international' of armaments manufacturers does not wholly dominate English foreign policy. But that is all. The MacDonald Cabinet, whose titular leader is becoming more vague and powerless every day, has not turned pacifist or anti-Japanese. Official England is not suggesting any such embargo on Japan alone as various unofficial Americans have advocated from time to time. Indeed, one cannot escape the conclusion that the embargo measure was decided upon more in the hope that the United States might follow suit soon than as a sop to domestic opinion, which, though not pro-American, is far less pro-Japanese than Foreign Minister Simon. The French, on the other hand, continue to ship munitions to both sides, and not one of them even troubled to point out, as Senator Borah did, that an arms embargo on both Japan and China would be equivalent to supporting Japan, since the Chinese have fewer implements of war available. Nor were specifically inclined Englishmen reassured when Sir Philip Sassoon, Under Secretary for Air, visited Göring, Reich Minister for Aviation, in Berlin, while Lord Londonderry, Sir Philip's superior, was explaining to the Disarmament Conference the difficulties of air disarmament, and the Federation of British Industries was protesting against international control of civil aviation.

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FEARING that the history of 1926 would be repeated and that a national government containing both Herriot and Tardieu would be formed, the French Socialists have swallowed their Marxism and supported Daladier's mildly liberal policies. For the Radical Socialists, who have been governing France since the elections of last May, have not lived up to either of their names. They cut military expenditures only half a billion francs—about 150 millions less than the conservative M.

Chéron proposed. Tax evasions and shameless speculation in primary food-stuffs continue. Jean Luchaire, youthful radical journalist, writing in *Notre Temps*, argues that a concentration government headed by Herriot should be established rather than a nationalist coalition headed by Tardieu with Herriot in a subordinate position. M. Luchaire maintains that the shift in last year's elections was from the right toward the centre and left, not from the centre toward the left or extreme left. But the supporters of both Herriot and Tardieu agree that some change in the Constitution is necessary. At present the Radical Socialist deputies do not dare to break away from the Socialists because many of them received Socialist votes when Socialist candidates withdrew in their favor on the second ballot. The existing French voting law provides that if no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot a second ballot is held a week later between the two leading candidates. Last May many Socialists ran first or second on the first ballot but did not receive the necessary majority and knew that all other parties would vote against them on the second ballot. Therefore, although they received a larger popular vote than the Radical Socialists, many of them withdrew from the second ballot and urged their supporters to vote for the Radical candidate. Thus the Radical deputies must compromise with supporters at home while the Socialist deputies must compromise with their Radical colleagues in the Chamber.

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THE CONSOLIDATION of the Little Entente into a political, economic, and military unit as powerful as pre-war Austria-Hungary marks a defeat for Italy in her efforts to encircle Yugoslavia and to dominate the Adriatic. We have referred several times to the project of a 'Fascist international' of Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Austria, and Germany, which the Italians have been trying to develop. But the strengthening of the Little Entente now dooms this ambitious scheme to futility. Fascist diplomacy almost succeeded in winning Rumania away from the Little Entente by offering to act as intermediary in that country's boundary disputes with Hungary and Russia, and, when Henry de Jouvenel arrived in Rome as French ambassador, Italian hopes reached their height. But the situation in other parts of Europe became too critical for M. de Jouvenel to offer concessions to a power that was assuming leadership over all the discontented nations in Europe, besides openly supporting and perhaps secretly subsidizing revolutionary forces in Yugoslavia. As we pointed out last month, Italy's geographic position and lack of natural resources deprive her foreign policy of any basis much more substantial than bluff. Nevertheless the Little Entente cannot be taken seriously as a new great power for all its apparent strength. National minorities in Yugoslavia are on the verge of revolt.

Labor troubles in Rumania have made necessary the use of troops. Trade still languishes. France can no longer provide the loans that have kept the Succession States functioning since the War. A strengthened Little Entente therefore does not mark the beginning of a new order in Europe but the last-ditch defense of an old one.

AN ARTICLE by C. Y. W. Meng entitled 'The Anglo-French-Japanese Secret Understandings?' in the liberal, American-owned *China Weekly Review* of Shanghai contains most of the rumors now circulating in official Chinese circles concerning the attitudes of different powers toward the Far Eastern war. Mr. Meng points out that M. Gérard, French ambassador to Tokyo from 1907 to 1914, made it clear in his book, *Ma Mission au Japon*, that France and Japan had divided their spheres of influence in China. It is also significant that Paul-Boncour recently refused to discuss in parliament whether the agreement between the two countries still held good in the light of the Washington Agreement of 1922 'to respect China's territorial and administrative integrity.' As for Great Britain, Mr. Meng states that Sir John Simon's friendly attitude toward Japan forced China to recognize Russia before America did but that this did not disturb Japan, which, he says, had already reached the following understanding with England in the event of a renewal of Chinese-Russian relations:—

1. Great Britain would not interfere with Japanese activities in Manchuria.
2. Japan would respect British interests in the Yangtze Valley.
3. Great Britain promises to give Japan some diplomatic help.
4. Japan will do its best to protect British prestige and interests in the Far East.
5. Japan promises not to conclude a nonaggression pact with Russia.

Mr. Meng also quotes a dispatch from the Soviet news agency, Tass, reporting a Mohammedan uprising in Sin-kiang, or Chinese Turkestan, which lies between northwestern India and the southeastern Soviet Republics:—

According to the opinion of the Tass agency, the Mohammedan revolt must have been 'started at the instigation of certain imperialists' who are utilizing the present situation to start a revolt in Sin-kiang with the object of forming it into an independent Chinese-Mohammedan state that would act as a buffer between China and Russia, somewhat along the same line as Manchukuo in Manchuria. The report went on to say that the British have been very active in Sin-kiang, and it further alleged that the present revolt was helped by a 'former officer of the British army,' giving his name and a detailed biographical sketch.

By advancing into Jehol Japan has completely severed northern communications between China and Russia. Mr. Meng believes that

England is about to cut off communications between the two countries in the West.

PENG-PAI'S 'Memoirs of a Chinese Communist' show how the peasants of China are being won over to Communism and throw light on an important movement that receives but little attention abroad. Owing to the strict censorship, even less is known about Communism in Japan, yet there are indications that radical doctrines are spreading rapidly there too. *Nicbi Nicbi*, a popular Tokyo daily, reports that the rich young people of Japan—like the rich young men of Oxford described elsewhere in this issue—are abandoning the political beliefs of their parents:

As sons and daughters of wealthy families have been brought up under favorable conditions, their conception of the organization of society is very simple and they are never concerned with constructive efforts to improve society. Herein lies the danger when they recklessly take up intricate problems and eventually find themselves involved in complicated matters.

Upper-class society in Japan is characterized either by extreme liberalism or extreme conservatism. Upper-class families are either very strict or very lenient with their children. The dangerous period from our point of view is that between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, when young men and women are attending colleges and universities.

When the radical movement first started in Japan, socially or financially unfortunate people and those of a perverted mentality rapidly took up Communism. In the past few years, however, the tendency has been reversed and many young men and women brought up in a normal, comfortable environment have become involved in Communism.

There are two reasons for this. Members of Communist groups do their best to secure recruits for the cause from among the wealthy classes in order to increase the funds for the movement. They find a fertile field awaiting them, as rich young men and women very easily become sympathetic toward Communism and then actually involved in the movement.

The activities of the Japanese Communists rival those of the 'old Bolsheviks' with whom Stalin used to work. They have been responsible for Japan's first daylight bank robbery and have been active in spreading propaganda among soldiers and sailors. On October 30 last, 2,200 radical suspects were arrested in Japan, 687 of them in Tokyo. Of this number more than two hundred were college graduates, 107 were women, and only 57 were laborers.

Here are three final expressions of anti-Hitlerite opinion from Germany such as will be no longer tolerated, followed by an enthusiastic account of a Hitler speech from a Nationalist organ.

# GERMAN Swan-Song

A FINAL  
SYMPOSIUM

## I. HAS MARXISM RUINED GERMANY?

By LOUISE SCHROEDER

Translated from *Vorwärts*, Berlin Social-Democratic Daily

HAVE the Marxists ruined Germany? This question occurs to all of us when we listen to the statements of the Hitler-Hugenberg-Papen Government. Two declarations in particular force this question upon us. The first of these is, 'Fourteen years of Marxism have ruined Germany,' and the second is, 'The task we must accomplish is the hardest that any German statesmen have faced in human memory.'

Significant memories arise from fourteen years ago, during the last months of the War, when somebody we were fond of died and had to be laid to rest in paper clothing. Worse yet, a child was born and the first things that he wore were made of

paper. Stockings, shirts, coats, jackets, and shoes were worn out to the last scrap. After long standing in line one finally received a supply certificate, but it was often a matter of weeks before the desired article of clothing could be procured. And when hunger ate at one's vitals there was nothing but the same dried vegetables, turnip coffee, and wretched bread made out of everything except flour. And how much more painful it was for us women when the men came back from the front, ten million of them, spiritually and physically sick, and when the wounded returned from the hospitals and we could offer them nothing but our misery. But there were hundreds of thousands who

never came back, having fallen in the War. As for ourselves, who of us was still sound after four years of hunger and all the mental anguish we had endured? How many of us were ruined for life by having had to work too hard, spending day and night in a factory, a railway, a street car, or tilling the fields?

Were the Marxists, the Social Democrats, to blame for all this? No. These and many other sufferings were the result of the War and the measures of the war governments, to which not a single Social Democrat had belonged, but which had been composed exclusively of the friends of Herr Von Papen and Herr Hugenberg.

The next fourteen years were spent in rebuilding this waste land, in giving back to the German people the possibility of life, and it was a tremendous task. But the men who had formerly been in power, the men who are to-day raising their heads again, abdicated in the face of this labor, and therefore the miserable Marxists had to try to meet the situation. It was they who really had to solve the most difficult task in the memory of man, and since they had come from the working class they regarded it as their natural duty to give the working class in this new Germany better living conditions than old imperial Germany had offered.

What woman who reads these lines has not realized this? If you work for your living you know that not only have women recovered the rights that they lost during the War but that their condition has been still further improved. Or have you accepted thoughtlessly the shorter working day and the voice you now have in determining the conditions of your work? These better working

conditions, which certainly have not released you entirely from heavy labor, did not fall from the sky. They were incorporated in the Republic through the efforts of Social Democracy. And, if you are a mother, is the protection that the Republic has given you in the form of a twelve to eighteen weeks' leave of absence before and after your delivery of no importance? Is it of no consequence that to-day two-thirds of all the women in confinement have a legal right to the assistance of a midwife and doctor and to maternity aid? For there was nothing of this sort in the old Germany. And it was for lack of these privileges that women died in childbirth by the tens of thousands and that hundreds of thousands of babies died during their early infancy. As a result of the maternity laws infant mortality has been cut almost in two and the mortality rate of the mothers has been reduced to a minimum. I believe no woman needs to be told what this means to her as a woman and as a mother.

For we all know that the wife of the worker and the clerk has two threats hanging over her like the sword of Damocles—first, the threat of illness, disablement, or premature infirmity on the part of the family breadwinner, or sickness within the family, and, secondly, the threat of unemployment. Who among us is not familiar with the anxiety of aging and increasingly inefficient members of the working class and their fear of losing their jobs? Anyone who is dependent on his own labor power regards this labor power and its application as the highest good. The old Germany paid small attention to such things. Only the poorest worker

had any claim to sick relief or old-age or disability pensions, and then only to the most modest extent. There was no such thing as unemployment insurance or family sick benefit. Relief for such conditions was provided by the Department for the Poor, and the working class avoided that department as much as possible because receiving poor relief was equivalent to losing one's political rights.

Have n't things changed tremendously in this respect? Under the Republic the number of those who are insured has increased steadily until more than twenty million men and their families are sure of aid in the event of disability or old age. Moreover, this assistance has expanded from year to year. It has gradually come to include family sick relief, accident insurance for those who have fallen victim to occupational illnesses as well as for those who have met with accidents, and disablement pensions that have increased from 15.60 marks a month before the War to between 38 and 43 marks. Perhaps many of our women readers have taken all this as a matter of course, and it is quite natural that such assistance should be given to working people, but it was not taken for granted until the coming of the Republic. Otherwise how can we explain the fact that as a result of these measures the average span of

life was increased sixteen years during the last twenty years?

You yourself know what unemployment relief means. The Social Democrats, the Marxists, were the first to adopt unemployment insurance, in November 1918, and it is thanks to their efforts that the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1927 became law. How much more your family would have suffered without these measures!

And now all this is in danger because of the world economic crisis of capitalism but not through that alone. The stupidity of the voters who have allowed the masters of old Germany, the feudal landowners and big industrialists, to return to power has imperiled the achievements of the Revolution. Never were they more threatened than by the present Government, in which Hitler occupies the central position, flanked by Herr Von Papen, the outspoken opponent of the 'charity state,' and Herr Hugenberg, the representative of heavy industry.

Shall we women look on peacefully? No, we shall defend what the Republic has brought to us and to the working class. We shall build it up again and extend it, because our highest purpose is the real charity state, the state in which men, women, young people, and children can live and work together happily.

## II. GERMANY, EUROPE, AND WAR

*By THEODOR NEUBAUER*

From *International Press Correspondence*, Berlin Communist Weekly, English Edition

**T**HE first two weeks of the Hitler Government have already considerably changed the political atmosphere of

Europe and so increased the tension between the imperialist powers that the general public is alarmed.

The Hitler-Hugenberg-Papen Cabinet has not done anything officially to bring this about. On the contrary, in its government proclamation it displayed extreme reserve in regard to foreign policy. The proclamation contained not a word about Versailles or the Lausanne Tribute Pact, nor did it mention the tribute payments and foreign debts. In the election appeal of the Hitler Government there even occurs a passage that neither Stresemann nor Rathenau would have written: 'If Germany, however, is to experience this political and economic revival and conscientiously fulfill its duties toward other nations, this presupposes a decisive act: the overcoming of communist disintegration in Germany.'

The combating of communism in Germany is thus described as a prerequisite for fulfilling the Versailles Treaty. The declarations that Frick, the Reich Minister of the Interior, Herr Funck, chief of the government press bureau, and finally the Reich Chancellor Hitler himself made to the representatives of the foreign press were likewise couched in very peaceable terms. Germany's foreign creditors were assured that they had no need to fear that there would be any dabbling with the currency or any enforced reduction of their interest claims. The powers that are behind the Versailles system were assured that Germany wishes to live in peace and friendship with the whole world and must regard as enemies only those who begrudge her her place in the sun. Hitler himself declared to the foreign journalists that he had never made a fiery speech in his life, and that nobody is more desirous of peace than he.

Immediately after the formation of the Hitler-Papen-Hugenberg Government a rumor was spread in France about a German-Italian-Hungarian military alliance. Herriot, as chairman of the Chamber's Foreign Policy Committee, made declarations that caused it to appear as if the existence of such a Fascist Triple Alliance were almost an established fact. The deputy Ybarnegaray even positively declared that he knew for certain that since August 1932 there had existed a secret offensive and defensive pact between Italy, Hungary, and Germany.

The German Government immediately denied the existence of such an alliance. In Paris nobody gave any credence to this denial. Mussolini also issued a denial, but equally in vain. The Italian press replied in a very angry tone to the French declarations. This in turn only served to increase the tension. Regarding the mood prevailing in French political circles, the Paris correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* reports:—

'This [political tension] has increased with alarming rapidity in the last few days, and the fear that, in connection with the shifting of power in Germany, the whole of European foreign policy may experience a change dangerous to peace is spreading like a devastating fire. It is undeniable that the French Chamber is firmly convinced that a German-Italian-Hungarian military alliance is practically completed and that Italy, on the strength of this alliance, is prepared to conduct a provocative policy that may lead in the next few days to the official annexation of Albania and have incalculable consequences for the whole of Europe. In all French circles, without distinction, the situa-

tion is regarded as exceedingly serious and the Government appears to be repeatedly giving the parliamentary deputies confidential assurances that it is adopting every precaution in order to be able to meet the situation should it take a threatening turn.'

This report in a German newspaper, which constitutes a résumé of many impressions gathered by its correspondent, shows most clearly how imminent is the danger of the outbreak of war. But in the meantime some other factors have further aggravated the situation.

## II

On February 9, at the Geneva Disarmament Conference, the French Foreign Minister, Paul-Boncour, drew his own conclusions from the new situation and declared that the Five-Power Treaty of December 11, 1932, concerning equality of rights for Germany, could not take the place of a decision of the conference, and that France, when the time came, would make it clear that she could conceive of equality of rights only with an organization ensuring security. This means nothing else but an annulment of the Five-Power Agreement. The German government press replied to this with a storm of indignation and spoke of 'a new and serious provocation of Germany,' of 'an open challenge' and so on. The German representative at the Disarmament Conference, Herr Nadolny, was instructed to make a counter-declaration. This declaration, compared with the tone of the German government press, appeared surprisingly tame and said nothing more than that the Reich Government still held to its opinion regarding the Five-Power Agreement.

The French representatives simply ignored the German declaration. If the situation were the same as it was in November, then the German Government would undoubtedly have regarded such an affront on the part of the French as a reason for leaving the Disarmament Conference. But the German bourgeoisie do not venture to do this in the present situation.

Far greater excitement than that occasioned by the German-French dispute in Geneva was caused by an interview with Hitler published by the *Daily Express* which immediately created a great sensation in all the capitals of Europe. In this interview Hitler, for the first time in his capacity as Reich Chancellor, put forward concrete demands in the realm of foreign policy. The first demand was for Germany's equality with France on the armament question; this was published on the very same day on which Neurath silently pocketed the French insult at Geneva. The second demand was: revision of the Versailles Treaty (compared with the National Socialist programme this undoubtedly represents a big retreat, but for France, Poland, and Czechoslovakia was tantamount to an open challenge). The third demand, abolition of the Polish corridor, roused the Polish bourgeoisie to fury, and in addition strengthened the suspicion that perhaps there really exists a Fascist Triple Alliance. The fourth demand, handing back of the colonies to Germany, put England's back up. This interview was truly by no means a masterpiece of sagacious foreign policy, but was born of the necessity of doing something to please the National Socialist supporters.

The Hitler interview immediately

called forth a storm of chauvinistic indignation in Paris, Warsaw, and Prague. For Poland, the demand for the abolition of the corridor means war, wrote the *Kurjer Warszawski*, and the French and the Czech press replied in similar tones.

The Hitler Government attempted to pour oil on the troubled waters; it published a 'denial' that confirmed more than it contradicted. The Government was in a by no means enviable situation. A flat denial would have been too much for the followers of the National Socialists and the German Nationalists; a semidenial, such as was issued, was bound to render the situation still worse. In addition to this, a part of the government press, as for instance the *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, simply ignored the denial and insisted on the authenticity of the report of the interview published in the *Sunday Express* and declared that 'behind these demands there are now gathered the force of united, national Germany, and as a result the strength of the German demands has increased in a manner dangerous to the Peace of Versailles.'

While Franco-German antagonisms have thus become dangerously acute, the German bourgeoisie view with the greatest anxiety the French endeavors to establish closer relations between France and the Soviet Union. In the

past few years the German bourgeoisie have never had the courage to rely on the 'Russian support in the rear' of which they talked so much. On the contrary, they have more and more openly sacrificed their relations with the Soviet Union to their striving after the formation of a bloc with the Western imperialist powers. This went so far that at Lausanne Papen offered an accord *à trois* of Germany, France, and Poland against the Soviet Union. The Hitler Government, in the few weeks it has been in office, has talked so much about 'exterminating Bolshevism,' 'repelling the Bolshevik invasion,' and carrying on an international fight against Bolshevism, that it is not surprising that these gentlemen now view German-Russian relations with some concern.

The international political situation as it exists to-day offers scarcely more than two possibilities for the German bourgeoisie: either they must undertake an ignominious retreat, or they must slide into a political adventure the consequences of which cannot be foreseen. Should caution triumph this time, the Germany of Hitler and Papen will soon be again in a situation similar to that which it is in to-day. This means that the danger of war for the chief European countries has become permanent and exceedingly threatening.

### III. FRANCE LOOKS AT HITLER

*By FRIEDRICH SIEBURG*

Translated from the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Frankfurt Liberal Daily

OUR Paris correspondent, Friedrich Sieburg, has described the attitude of France toward domestic po-

litical developments in Germany as being a compound of fear and defiance. Our correspondent has sent us the

following dispatch on the problem of Franco-German relations, which are so important to the whole world of Europe.—EDITOR, *Frankfurter Zeitung*.

Let us look for a moment at the confusion Hitler's rise to power has created abroad and consider the general effect that the change of government in Berlin has had on our neighboring country. The French regard the rise of the National Socialist German Labor Party as more than a political event, as a manifestation of nature that not only affects politicians, diplomats, business leaders, and other public figures but touches the daily life of each individual Frenchman and sharpens the crisis of confidence from which the world at large is suffering. The French think that Europe, in fact, the whole world, is revolving around them with increasing speed. The more the Frenchman feels that he stands at the immovable centre of things, the dizzier he gets and the less clearly he is able to perceive the forces that are ruling the world.

In France, where the leading figures feel obliged to advocate a kind of general progress which, in the words of Herriot, 'leads the people away from mythology and toward science,' the rise of reaction to power seems a step backward and arouses the greatest bewilderment. Never forget how much France believes in the complete applicability of its own political forms to the whole world. It regards its own democratic system as having been completely justified by the outcome of the War and it has pointed this democracy like a pistol at the head of every nation that has wanted to go in another direction. The left-wing par-

ties have never forgiven Italy its Fascism. Only a few months ago there were attacks in the Chamber of Deputies on the form of state devised by Mussolini, and Herriot rightly thought he had become a full-fledged revolutionist when he wrote, apropos of the Soviet Union, that he had at last convinced himself that France had no right to take exception to the domestic government of any other country.

The tyrannic French belief in the power of reason in all the public and personal manifestations of human life is accompanied by an ever-growing misapprehension of the character of the German people. In French eyes the German who submits himself to discipline with a mass of marching men has repudiated reason and shown that he possesses the nature of a slave. The Frenchman cannot imagine that individuals, even a whole people, can attach less importance to the absolute rights of the private individual than he himself does. In order to understand the developments that have culminated in the form of government that now exists in Germany one must have learned by experience what the mass means as a political reality. This is just what our neighboring country cannot do. There is such a thing as the French people, perhaps there is even such a thing as the French nation, but there is no such thing as a mass in France because each individual possesses a keen feeling for private property and complete personal freedom. Hence a mass seems like an affront to the conception of personality, like a denial of individual reason, in short, like mere raw material.

France has never understood Adolf

Hitler's success and has never wanted to understand it. Whereas England has tried to gain a just understanding of the phenomenon of this man, France has always regarded him as the personification of excess, as the beneficiary of social misery, as the skilled exploiter of the latent instinct for power that the French believe is inherent in every German. Of course, French politics have brought forth some successful demagogues. Only recently the memory of the patriot, Gambetta, has been celebrated. But the appeal of these men to the crowd lay primarily in their arguments. Every successful speech, delivered to a nation that enjoys oratory as much as France does, owes its effectiveness to its surge of logic. The speaker does not appeal to the powers of darkness but to the powers of light. He does not appeal to emotion but to ideas, and every one of his words proves that the Frenchman values light more highly than darkness and nothing alarms a Frenchman more than to be told that this opinion of his is merely one point of view.

I am not going to attempt to contrast the characters of the two nations, especially since the National Socialist German Labor Party does not stand for the whole German people. But the point is that France has never responded to anything that has happened in Germany without attempting to describe our character from a point of view that is almost always false. Clearly a nation that has been united since the time of Louis XI and that has followed a national style that no one could fail to recognize since the time of Louis XIV, a nation that still makes an ideal of property and that, in the

words of Alain, prefers 'resistance against governmental interference to reformist activities,' cannot understand a movement that is based on antagonism to property and the desire to sacrifice everything to that end. In France there is such a strong agreement among all citizens, there is such national unanimity concerning what is really French, that people take their solidarity for granted. In Germany, on the other hand, community spirit is so wildly and passionately desired that people fight, wound, and even kill each other in its name. Because they do not understand how to discuss, they commit murder, whereas in France people are so insnared in the habit of discussion that they can hardly put through a budget.

## II

Yet the French cannot make up their minds to regard Hitler as a man who has achieved a *coup d'état*. They insist on comparing him to their own men of 1792, who also allowed themselves to be carried away by the masses or by the people. Yet Bonapartism, which the French have long regarded as unforgivable, is not what has come to Germany. Bonapartism implies sudden change, a cutting of all ties, a break in logical development, a return to brute force, a sudden leap in the dark, a reaching for the moon, in short, something un-French. Nor can it be denied that France expects such a Brumaire to-day in Berlin, since nobody can imagine that Adolf Hitler will be freely granted completely unlimited power in the sense in which the party that he has created wants it. Everyone is therefore waiting in a state of great unrest.

From the first day when Hitler and his followers emerged on the scene of world history, public opinion in France has reacted to them with the sharpest antipathy. This antipathy contains an element that not even the most bitter German critic of the Nazis and of the aims that they are trying to achieve would share. France aimed at Adolf Hitler but it almost always hit the German people. What the French had to say against this strange mass movement that was far too large to be ignored was often directed at each one of us. Positive forces and tendencies in the German people, such as their desire for greater international justice, their growing sense of the social importance of the masses, their increasing powers of moral resistance, were summarily ascribed to the followers of the swastika cross, and at the same time the things for which the Nazis were criticized were blamed on the whole German people—militarism, blind insistence on crushing individuality, pleasure in domination, the capacity for hating one's fellow citizens.

Thus people here in France have come to regard Hitler and his movement as an expression of the whole German people. This misapprehension has made it difficult for us in recent years to describe and interpret what is happening at home to the French. We cannot abandon an opposition which is a matter of conviction and without which there would be no more life in Germany. Yet we can agree with our foreign friend only to a very limited extent when he launches into a passionate attack on the Nazis, because his animadversions are essentially directed against our whole nation. The Frenchman has

suddenly decided to throw overboard his conception of the German middle class, although such a frantic method of analyzing an important problem is doomed in advance. For the utterly middle-class nation of France knows well enough that an isolated middle class cannot go on existing indefinitely, that the middle-class attitude must be universal in order to exist at all. Having blindly tried for years to win over the liberal German middle class to what seems to us a doubtful world order, the French are now equally determined to deny that this middle-class element has any will to live or even any life. Meanwhile France regards itself as completely liberal. It feels and acts and even believes in the world situation only so far as it can see that condition in liberal outlines. In short, France through its condemnation of the present German situation is pursuing a catastrophic cultural policy that proves how insensitive the French *élite* have been rendered from long observation of their own condition.

### III

Invisibly, France is falling into a kind of crusading spirit. We have heard Daladier call upon the great democracies of the world with all the fire of a Jacobin. This desire of the French to bring the world over to their point of view often amounts to a disease, and this disease is now driving them to form a coalition to defend against other nations the values to which France attaches importance, whether these values are moral, cultural, or political. France still wants Europe to be transformed into a classroom in which France occupies

the position of teacher. Of course, backward pupils, not to mention bad boys, figure in this scene. Mussolini, Hitler, and the Hungarians are regarded as just alike, and French foreign policy has already done them a grave injustice. Since people here cannot refrain from identifying Germany and National Socialism, they are talking about a conspiracy of the discontented powers.

The discontented powers? Good heavens, is France contented? Is this country that is terrified at the prospect of treaty revision, that has been unable to solve its governmental crisis for months, whose state apparatus is beginning to fall to pieces, whose public credit is in a critical condition, whose parliament is not able to vote a month's budget, whose peasants are so alarmed by taxes that they have broken windows in Paris, whose officials, shopkeepers, and middle-class population are demonstrating on the streets—is this country contented? And is this nation's belief in the present European order still undisturbed at a time when its own people are suffering catastrophically from a world economic crisis, having invested their capital in this world order?

Although to the average French citizen the compulsive idea that Hitler means either war or at least a dangerous threat to weary Europe has great reality, let us turn our attention elsewhere. For this belief, which has influenced foreign policy, is merely the extension of the fundamental French idea that the nationalistic ideology of modern Germany contains an element of destruction that is directed against the world of Versailles, concerning whose modification people will perhaps

be able to speak some day. Furthermore, France considers this element in Germany dangerous to the whole human order, to which every Frenchman and his family are passionately devoted and which political methods alone are not sufficient to defend. Then, too, there is also the Polish corridor, which the French believe was never so much in danger as it is to-day. But what's the use, the French say, of our helping Europe to solve these insoluble problems, since the corridor is merely a lever with which the Germans want to upset the whole world?

Only four months ago the French regarded the Papen government as a lesser evil compared to the possibility of Hitler. They preferred Prussian order to German chaos. They believed that the Papen régime was reactionary, but because it supported private property and capitalism it terrified them less than the dark, revolutionary applause with which the excited masses greeted Hitler. This point of view has changed a little recently. What would seem to us an unimportant confusion of relationships between the citizen and the state, a confusion that has come about here in France as a consequence of the endless conflict about the budget, seems to the French like a threat to the existence of their whole democratic apparatus. The words 'state authority' have been heard too frequently of late for the French democracy not to feel uncomfortable at the appearance in Germany of a régime that subjects everything to state authority in such an oppressive way.

But this, as Kipling would say, is another story. France does not know

whether it should feel greater fear of Hugenberg, who is monarchistic but at the same time capitalistic and bourgeois, or of Adolf Hitler, who is militaristic and demands treaty revision but who also stands for a social

and national element that cannot be ignored in the light of the present crisis and that may even play some part in overcoming it. In a word, is Germany going backward or forward? That is the real question in France.

#### IV. HITLER SPEAKS

Translated from the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, Hugenberg Nationalist Daily

**O**N FEBRUARY 10 Chancellor Hitler made his first important public speech before a capacity house in the Berlin Sportpalast. Thousands of people also assembled in ten great squares outside the Sportpalast, where loud speakers were installed that enabled the masses who could not find room in the Sportpalast to hear the first great political speech the Chancellor has made since he assumed power. Also, a radio broadcast was arranged for the first time, since the Chancellor was not making a purely electioneering address for the National Socialist Party but was outlining his programme and the platform on which he was standing. All German radio stations were hooked up during the Chancellor's speech and during the introductory speech of Dr. Goebbels, the Reich propaganda chief of the National Socialist Party.

In his great political speech the Chancellor laid the foundations of his policy and once again gave a brief historical survey describing the growth of the National Socialist movement and his own life work. Tremendous applause greeted him when he appeared in the Sportpalast and it was many minutes before he could make himself heard. The Chancellor began with the brief, factual statement that on January 30 a new gov-

ernment of national concentration had been formed. He expressed his firm belief that now the goal had been reached for which he had fought during so many years.

The National Socialist Party, he said, had entered the second decisive phase of struggle. As a private soldier in the War, he and ten million others had witnessed the collapse of Germany. However, unlike the others, he had recognized that the Revolution must be opposed with every means, and he had also recognized that one must learn from past mistakes and that Germany must follow the same painful path that it had pursued sixty years ago. In November 1918 he knew that German revival could be achieved only by restoring German unity. Just as the divided German states had been reunited once before, so now a unified people must be created. No policy could be based on distinctions of position, property, occupation, or class. The German people must be persuaded and forced to find itself again in complete unity.

These were his fundamental ideas in 1918. He had also recognized that Marxism meant the perpetuation of parties and hence the impoverishment of the people and treason to the working class. For fourteen years this popular treason had been in the

saddle, with only a few brief intermissions.

The Chancellor then described the terrible course that German foreign and domestic policy had taken in the last fourteen years. He described how the German people had been robbed of all they had achieved by the Versailles Treaty, which divided the world into two camps, and by the Marxist and Communist International and the domination of international financial capital. The men of November 1918 were entirely responsible for the destruction of German life. The Chancellor attacked the Marxist training of youth, the repudiation of all the great representatives of the German people and of the flag of the old German Empire. He spoke of the destructive effects of the inflation, of the extortionate usury that prevailed in the so-called Socialist Republic.

## II

Before the Chancellor came to his own programme he asked whether the Marxist opposition had pursued any programme during the last fourteen years. If an affirmative could be given then it proved that the Marxist programme had been fatal. After the destruction that had been wrought in the past fourteen years the German nation must be rebuilt from the ground up, since Marxism had destroyed it from its very foundations. The Chancellor then enumerated his tasks and the points of his programme. He first said that he would not lie or swindle or try to deceive the German people. He had always said that revival could occur only if the German people recovered its inner strength, and he was determined not to let anything

stand in the way of accomplishing this task.

The Chancellor also said that he could not promise that revival would come of its own accord. Everything that the people got would be the result of their own work. No one must count on help from outside. Even in our fathers' day Germany's development was not a gift from abroad. There are certain definite laws of politics and economics that must be observed. But the fundamentals of German life are the nation and the soil. His purpose is therefore to maintain the nation and the soil. He does not live for theories and fantastic programmes but for maintaining the German people. World peace can be maintained only by the support of strong nations. A world culture can be built only on the national cultures of different nations. World economics can exist only on the basis of strong national economic systems. Believing that Germany's fight for life must be successful, he announced that his first practical purpose would be to eliminate all causes of destruction. The elimination of class hatred was one goal toward which he had worked for a long time. 'Let the parties of destruction,' the Reich Chancellor exclaimed, 'know this one thing: as long as the Almighty gives me life, my determination and my desire to destroy them will remain boundless. Never shall I be ready for compromise. Of Marxism and the German people, only one can triumph, and it is Germany that will win.'

The Chancellor went on to say that the construction of a new Germany must begin with the German peasant and that in the future the German worker should no longer be a stranger in the German Reich. The

worker must be drawn into the German community as a representative of the German nation. The value of the individual and his creative power must be restored by breaking off with the foul manifestations of democracy. The purity of the German people, German honor, German art, and German music must be built up again. The Chancellor announced: 'We will lead our youth back into that splendid Empire of our past and introduce it to the works and creations of our ancestors. The younger generation shall bow down humbly before those who lived and wrought and created before us.'

The Chancellor urged respect for the two million who had fallen in the War and whose sacrifices had been betrayed during the last fourteen years. He urged respect for the old German Army. 'In this way,' said the Chancellor, 'our programme will be carried out relentlessly against anyone who tries to turn against the nation and will be the brother and friend of anyone who will fight with it to revive his people.' In behalf of God

and the individual conscience the Government was again turning to the people. 'If the people desert us,' cried the Chancellor, 'that will not stand in our way. We shall continue in the direction that is necessary to preserve Germany from ruin.'

Then the Chancellor explained that the German people must give the Government four years in order to be able to judge the Government and the movement. He had not taken office for prestige or money but for the sake of the German people. It was the most difficult decision of his whole life. He made his decision because he believed that it had to be and because he was convinced that our people was at last coming to its senses. Hitler closed with these words: 'We have no other purpose than to serve what is highest on earth to us, our people. I cannot rid myself of the conviction that the nation will rise up again. I cannot abandon my love for this nation. It is my belief that it will rise again, a new German Reich of greatness, honor, power, splendor, and justice.'

A Chinese Communist organizer describes his activities among the peasants, for which he was subsequently executed.

# Memoirs of a Chinese Communist

By PENG-PAI

From *International Literature*  
Moscow English-Language Literary Review

THE following notes were written by one of the most famous leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, Peng-pai. His name is bound up with all the stages of the Chinese peasant movement, beginning with the organization of peasants' unions in Kwangtung by the Chinese Communists and ending with the formation of the Chinese Soviet Territories. The first peasants' union was founded in Haifeng thanks to the initiative and tireless efforts of Peng-pai. It was there that under his leadership Soviet government was established. The first Soviet district in China was formed in November 1927, the historic 'Haifeng Soviet Republic.'

Peng-pai was a member of the Chinese Communist Party from 1920 on, and was one of the most active organizers of the Kwangtung party section and a member of the Kwangtung Provincial Committee. He was later elected a member of the Central Committee and finally of the Political

Bureau. In September of last year he met with an untimely end at the hands of the Kuomintang butchers.

These notes were first published in the Chinese magazine, *Cbungo Nung-min*.—EDITOR OF *International Literature*.

In 1921 I was head of the Department of Education in Haifeng. After the demonstrations of the First of May in which, at my instigation, the pupils of all the boys' and girls' schools in the district had taken part, the Haifeng gentry began to spread rumors about the imminent 'introduction of communism and the nationalization of women.' One delegation after another came to Cheng Chiung-ming with complaints. As a result I was dismissed. I then resolved to go and work in the country.

'It's simply a waste of time and energy,' my friends in Haifeng told me. 'The peasants are very scattered and can't be organized. Besides,

they're so backward that it'll be impossible to do any propaganda among them.'

My people were big landowners in the Haifeng district. My father received about a thousand sacks of rice a year as payment for rent. There were about thirty members of the family, while the tenants with their families numbered five hundred. When they learned at home that I intended to organize a peasant movement, all the members of the family—male and female, young and old, with the exception of two brothers who refused to express any opinion whatsoever—hated me violently. My eldest brother, I believe, was ready to kill me. But I took no notice of this.

It was in May that I resolved to make my first attempt and started out for a village in the Chishan district. I was wearing a foreign-style suit, the sort usually worn by students, and a round straw hat. The first person I met in that village was a peasant of about thirty years of age who was grubbing about near a manure heap.

'Sit down, sir,' he said, without stopping his work. 'Sit down and have a smoke. You've come about the tax, I suppose? But we haven't a theatre here.'

I hastened to reassure him. 'I haven't come about the theatre tax at all. I just want to make friends with the peasants. I know what a hard life you have of it, so I thought—well, we might have a talk about things.'

'Oh, it's hard enough—yes, but that's our fate. Have a cup of tea, sir, will you—but we've no time for talking. Don't be angry with us, please, for that.' And with these words the peasant hurried away.

After a while a young fellow of

about twenty appeared. He looked a bit brighter than the first, and started to ask questions.

'What battalion do you belong to, sir? What do you work at? Why have you come here?'

'I'm neither an officer nor an official,' I replied. 'I was formerly a student. I've simply come out here for a walk and in the hope of getting to know some of you.'

The young fellow laughed.

'Oh, we're no good. No fit company for gentlemen, anyway. Perhaps you'll have a cup of tea?'

And, he, too, like the first peasant, hurried away without looking round. I wanted to say something more, but he was already out of hearing.

I was very upset. I remembered what my friends had told me and my heart grew heavier. I went off to the next village. There I was greeted by the loud barking of dogs. They bared their teeth at me, and snarled, a hostile enough demonstration, but I mistook it for a welcome and went boldly on my way.

The doors were all locked and there was not a living soul in the village. Some had gone to work in the fields, others to the market. I went on to a third village. The sun was already sinking. It began to grow dusk. I was afraid to arouse the suspicions of the peasants so I decided not to enter this village and turned homeward.

At home, I was treated like an enemy. No one wanted to speak to me. They had all had their supper, and there was nothing left but a little soup. I ate it and went off to my own room. I opened my diary, thinking to write down the results of the day's work, but there were no results. I tossed and turned all night in my

bed, thinking out various plans. As soon as it was light, I got up, had some breakfast, and started out again. I came again to the village I had visited the day before.

'Have you come to collect your debts, mister?' an elderly man asked me.

'No, no!' I protested. 'On the contrary, I've come to help you collect yours. You're owed a great deal, you know. You have forgotten, perhaps. But I have decided to remind you.'

'Oh, it would be all right if we didn't owe anything to others. Who could owe money to the likes of us?'

'Why, don't you know? The landowners owe you a whole lot. They idle away their time year after year, while you are worn out with work. And then the rent you have to pay! One *mow* of land (one-sixth of an acre) costs the owners no more than a hundred dollars, and you peasants have to work this *mow* for hundreds of years. Just try to count up how much rice they get from you all these years. We've decided that it's unjust, and so I've come here to talk to you and discuss how it would be possible for you to get what is owing to you from the landowners.'

The peasant laughed. 'It's too good to be true! Even if you only owe them a *sheng* of rice, they beat you and put you in prison. But that's how fate has willed it—some grow rice and others eat it. But excuse me, sir, I must go to market now.'

'What's your name?' I asked.

'My name? Oh, I'm from this village. Come in when you have time some day.' I saw that he did not want to let me know his name, and so I did not press the point.

There were only women left in the village. The men were working in the fields. It would be awkward for me to be seen talking to women. I wandered about undecided for a long time and then went off to another village. In fact I went round several that day, but with as little result as the day before. I had a little more to put in my diary that day, though.

That evening it occurred to me that in speaking to the peasants we often used difficult expressions. Probably a great part of our speeches were incomprehensible to them. I took a number of abstract terms and bookish expressions and tried to put them into simple language. Then I thought out a new plan of action. I decided not to go into the villages, but to pick out the liveliest spot I could find at a cross-roads near a town and start propaganda there. This I did.

In the morning I made my way to the temple of Lun-shan. The main roads from several districts ran past this spot. The peasants who took this road usually stopped before the temple to rest. I began talking to them about their living conditions. I spoke of the causes of their poverty and of how to get free from oppression. I gave examples of exploitation by landowners and explained the necessity for organization.

## II

At first I spoke only to two or three peasants. Then gradually the circle of listeners increased. A small meeting gathered. They listened, half doubting, half believing. No more than four or five joined in the conversation. About ten simply listened. But even this was no small achievement.

Once I tried to explain in detail

why the peasants should organize.

'If the peasants would unite they would be able to secure lower rent. The landowners would never be able to stand out against them. Illegal taxes and every kind of oppression would cease. The landowners would no longer be able to take the law into their own hands.'

'What are you gabbing about there?' an elderly peasant shouted angrily. 'You'd better ask Ming-ho not to press for the back rents, then maybe I'll believe that you're not fooling us!' Ming-ho was a relation of mine, a merchant and landowner.

I was just going to reply, when suddenly a young man sitting beside me broke in.

'That's not the way to talk,' he admonished my opponent. 'You are working on Ming-ho's land. If Ming-ho reduces the rent, you're the only one that will get any good from it. But what about me? I'm not renting from him. The question is then not to ask somebody for something, but to find out if we can organize or not. It does n't concern only you; it concerns us all.'

I was delighted to hear this rebuke. I found out the name of the speaker and asked him to come to see me in the evening. He came and we had a long talk.

'Every time after your speeches,' he told me, 'the other lads and myself—we go off and argue with those who have no class feeling. They're all afraid that you're just trying to stir them up. But our lads—we believe what you say.'

I asked him who these lads were.

'There are Ling-pei, Ling-huang, Li Lao-san, Li Hsi-hsiang—all good friends of mine.'

'Could n't you ask them to come round for a talk? You run and get them, will you, and I'll go and see about some tea.'

'All right. I won't be a minute.'

The water was just beginning to boil when Chang Ma-an came back with his friends. They were all young peasants, none of them more than thirty years of age, but, to judge from their manner and conversation, quite wide awake. I started to talk about the peasant movement, the most urgent question for me.

'I go out every day to do propaganda, and the peasants pay no attention and don't want to speak to me. What should I do?' I asked them.

'One reason,' said Ling-pei, 'is that the peasants have no time to spare. Another is that your speeches are too complicated—I don't understand them always. Then, of course, you have no friends among the peasants. The best thing to do would be for us to go together some evening, about seven or eight o'clock. That's the time work is finished in the village. And try to speak as simply as you can.' Clearly these were sensible lads.

'But remember,' they warned me solemnly, 'when you're making propaganda in the villages, leave the subject of their gods and saints alone.' I made no objection.

'And what if just a few of us organized a peasant union?' Li Lao-san went on. 'If others joined us, all the better; if not we stay in the union ourselves, just the same.'

So we decided on this. For my part, I offered to go to the villages the next day.

'If you all agree, then let Chang Ma-an and Ling-pei call for me tomorrow morning.'

They were very pleased. We talked for a long while before they left.

'Success may not be far away,' I wrote in my diary when my visitors had left.

I had just finished breakfast when Chang and Ling appeared. We started out at once. We visited several villages in the Chishan district that day. Whenever my companions introduced me to the peasants, the latter became noticeably more at their ease. They talked frankly to me, were friendly, and agreed to call a meeting that very day. When we came in the evening everything was ready: a table, benches, lights. About seventy people had come. The young folks sat in front, the older peasants behind them, and the women at the very back.

I spoke of how the peasants had fallen into servitude, of the cruelty and oppression of the landowners, and indicated how it was possible for the peasants to obtain their freedom. The speech went on in the form of questions and answers. My words met with the approval of the peasants: they saw that we were familiar with their living conditions. At the close of the meeting it was decided to hold another meeting in a few days' time. I promised to bring a gramophone and to show them some conjuring tricks.

We visited still another village, where we were equally successful. Then we went off to the Chishan district. I had given notice beforehand that I would show some conjuring tricks there and make a speech. At the appointed time more than two hundred people had assembled. They all liked the tricks and I took advantage of this to make a long speech.

During the week we arranged similar meetings in other places. Every-

thing was going well. And then I noticed suddenly that Ling-pei and Chang Ma-an had seemed in low spirits for the last few days. They had become silent and thoughtful.

'No doubt the landowners have been putting out some rumors,' I thought, and began to question Ling and Chang. At first they made evasive replies, but I persisted and at last they resolved to make a clean breast of things.

'My father and mother and brothers,' said Ling-pei, 'are very dissatisfied that I spend my time going about with you and do not work in the fields. "You go off with this Peng-pai," says my father. "It's all right for him, but what will you do—starve?" And to-day when I started out he nearly beat me. And it's not only my father, but my mother and brothers and my wife—they all grumble at me. And so that's why I'm a bit down in the mouth.'

### III

For a week after that Chang and Ling gave themselves whole-heartedly to our work. They made rapid progress and soon spoke at meetings themselves.

We found ready listeners. When we raised the question of joining the union, however, difficulties arose. Each man would say: 'Oh, yes, I approve of this union. If the others join, then I will.'

We tried our best to convince them. 'If you're going to wait until everybody joins, then it'll be a thousand years before there is a union. Let's suppose, for instance, that a lot of people want to wade across a river. Each is afraid to move first. I wait for that one, he waits for me, we all

stand and do nothing. We should join hands and cross together. If one stumbles, the others will hold him up.'

At last they began to agree. 'All right. We'll join, we'll join.' I took out a notebook and began to write down the names. Several of those standing near agreed at first to join the union, but when they caught sight of my notebook they took fright and stole away. I resolved in the future not to write down the names openly.

Recruiting for the union went on very slowly. At the end of a month and a half we had managed to enlist about thirty members.

A remarkable thing happened just about that time. In the Yunglu district there lived a peasant that I knew as one of our union members. He had adopted a little girl of six who was destined to be the wife of his son when she grew up. Then a terrible accident happened. The child fell into a privy and was drowned. Her own family learned of this and resolved to avenge her. About forty relatives, both male and female, came with the child's mother and made a scene. They shouted that our peasant had killed the child for no reason at all, and that therefore one of the members of his family should pay with his life. A fight began.

We called all the members of our union at once and discussed what was to be done. We decided to go all together to Yunglu and ask the assailants for an explanation. This we did. We questioned the relatives of the dead child, wrote down the names of both men and women, and then ordered them to return home.

When they saw that we were writing down their names in the notebook,

they became frightened. At the same time the district elder, Cho Ming-mei, came up to act as mediator, hoping to get a big fine out of the peasants. But we chased him away and nearly beat him. This made a big impression on the assailants and they changed their tune. At last they went away with hanging heads. We were none the worse for the encounter.

The news spread to the villages for miles around. The peasants saw that our members stood by one another faithfully. We, for our part, made propaganda of the incident. From that time on, the number of peasants joining the union increased.

#### IV

At this time the usual scramble for land began among the peasants. The landowners, desirous of raising the rent, changed their tenants. Our union then made it a rule that any of our members who wished to rent a plot already taken by some other member should first obtain permission from the union. If the landowner wanted to raise the rent of the land leased by a member of the union or to give it to another peasant, the consent of our member and the sanction of our union was necessary; otherwise no one would be allowed to work on the land. Whoever broke this rule was to be heavily fined.

If a union member was forced, as a result of increased rent, to leave his allotment and was in a difficult position, he could request the union to find him another allotment or to recommend him for some kind of work. After this rule was established, rivalry ceased between the members of our union. Moreover, the land-

owners did not dare to raise the rents.

We also turned our attention to conflicts that arose between peasants. The gentry and the *tubao* always took advantage of these clashes to send the peasants up for trial or arbitration. This, of course, meant their ruin. We gave notice that all quarrels arising between our members should be reported to the union.

From that moment, the political influence in the village passed from the hands of the gentry to the peasants' union. The revenues of the district police and law courts fell considerably while their hatred of our union increased proportionately. At the same time the capable arbitration of peasants' conflicts by the union and a number of other important victories attracted new members daily. In September 1922 there were more than five hundred peasants in the union. Another branch was opened that month in the Chishan district.

Our union began to spread its influence to other districts. Now no less than ten persons on an average, per day, applied for membership. We carried on propaganda on a large scale. There was not a day or a night that we did not hold a meeting somewhere in the villages. Beginning with October, the number of persons joining the union increased to twenty a day. After the Chishan district, Gungping and others—altogether ten districts—organized peasants' unions forming a ring round the county town. We began to prepare for the founding of a county peasants' union.

A peasants' pharmacy and first-aid station were opened by the union in the chief street of Haifeng. A doctor who sympathized with our movement took charge of the pharmacy and gave

medical aid. Every member of the union had the right to free consultation and medicine at half price. The doctor's wife was a midwife and gave free help in confinements. Only half the cost of the medicine had to be paid for in these cases. This amounted to only twenty or thirty cents. It was not surprising, then, that the demand for medicines and the midwife's services greatly increased, especially since the membership cards were sometimes used by nonmembers.

## V

On the first of January 1923, the Haifeng County Peasants' Union was officially opened. By that time the Union had a membership of about 20,000 families, of 100,000 persons or one quarter of the population of the whole county. The ceremony was attended by more than sixty delegates from all the districts.

The pupils of the middle and higher elementary schools and also some of the intelligentia began to express, little by little, their sympathy with the Peasants' Union, and to offer their services. The Union employed them as propagandists. Propaganda took different forms. Every district appointed a meeting for a certain date, and the propaganda bureau sent a speaker to this meeting. Other propagandists moved about all the time from one district to another. Lastly, if some public amusements, theatricals, or religious processions were to be held, the peasants would notify the Union three days beforehand, and we would send an agitator there. So many notifications of this sort came from all over the county that we hardly had time to attend to all of them.

The Peasants' Union brought forward a new slogan, 'Organize peasants' schools!' The peasants' schools aimed at teaching the children arithmetic (so that they could not be defrauded by the landowners), how to write the characters for cereals and agricultural implements, and how to conduct the business of the peasants' unions. The peasants fully approved of all this.

The Union found a good teacher, hired a schoolhouse, and asked for no fees. How could the peasants not rejoice? The school rented a piece of land from a landowner. The money for this was supplied by the Peasants' Union. The agricultural implements, buffaloes, and labor were provided by the fathers and brothers of the pupils. They also did the ploughing and sowing. As soon as the hay-mowing season came round, the teacher and the children went to work in the fields. The children were divided into four groups and each group was given a definite plot. There was rivalry between the groups as to who would finish the reaping first. Thus the pupils were not only doing something useful but were also getting accustomed to agricultural labor. The actual harvesting was done by the fathers and brothers. With the exception of the rent paid to the landowner all the rice collected went to support the teacher.

No more than a month after the opening of the first school ten others, some of them evening schools, sprang up in different places. They were all under the guidance and control of the educational department of the Peasants' Union. More than five hundred peasants' children were thus given a chance to obtain an education.

As regards the department of agriculture, the union could not accomplish a great deal, partly on account of the lack of trained specialists, but chiefly because under the present system of rents increase of production would simply tend to enrich the landowner. The peasants regarded the land as other people's property and did not, therefore, even try to fertilize it properly. In order, however, to encourage the development of social impulses among the peasants the Union decided to take up the afforestation of the hills. According to our plan all the barren mountains of the county were, at the end of the third year, to be covered with green woods.

The court of arbitration attached to the Peasants' Union endeavored to use every case brought before it as a weapon in the struggle with the social evil of private property.

## VI

At the time of which we write the Peasants' Union was in its prime. The magistrate of the county, Wang Knei-ting (a henchman of Chang Tsung-ming), maintained a neutral attitude to the Union. The Union developed and in time became powerful.

For the peasants our slogans were: the reduction of rents, the curbing of the landowners' arbitrary rule, the abolition of all payments and obligations, and refusal to make presents to the police. To protect ourselves from our enemies we employed different slogans for the outside world: improvement of agriculture, the education of the peasants, and the organization of mutual aid.

The time passed with extraordinary

rapidity. It was already February 1923. On the first day of the Chinese New Year, when gay processions of peasants from all over the county came into Haifeng, we gave notice that on the 16th of January—Chinese old style—the Peasants' Union would hold its New Year festivities.

On the appointed day crowds of peasants with colored flags poured into the town from all parts. They were preceded by numerous bands and accompanied by village troupes of amateur actors who were to perform the Lion Dance in special costumes.

The meeting, organized on a big lawn in front of the Ling-tsu Temple, was attended by about 10,000 people, 6,000 of whom were members of the Union. After the music had ceased and the chairman had opened the meeting, speeches began. These were followed by singing and then the Lion Dance. It all concluded with the slogan, 'Long live the peasantry!' shouted by 10,000 voices to the deafening rattle of fireworks.

Speeches were made that day by Peng-pai, Huan Feng-ling, Yan Isishan, and others. 'For the proletariat and all toilers,' the speeches ran, 'there is no such thing as New Year joys until the victory of the revolution has been won. New Year's Eve for us is merely the day when we must pay our debts to the capitalist usurers. We are united by our common sorrows and sufferings. But we are using this day to demonstrate our strength and unity to our enemy, to strengthen our revolutionary spirit, and to prepare for the final struggle. That is why there is both pain and exultation in the heart of every one of us to-day.'

Two thousand new members joined

our Union that day. The funds of the Union were increased by four hundred dollars. After this, an average of one hundred new members joined daily. We could hardly get through all our work. The landowners began to get alarmed.

'We thought,' they complained, 'that nothing would come of it—that it was all boasting. And now it appears that they actually mean business.'

Chen Yuch-po, a landowner and 'gentleman,' resolved to crush the Peasants' Union at all costs. He asserted that we were preparing to introduce the 'pooling of wives and property.' At that time General Chung Jung-tang returned to Haifeng. He had not long before suffered some defeat, I do not remember from whom. With him there were only a hundred demoralized soldiers. Chen Yuch-po begged him to crush the Peasants' Union. The general, however, could not summon up enough courage to do so and Chen did not know what to do.

His two younger brothers occupied important posts in the Kwangtung government. He himself was regarded as the most influential person in Haifeng after Cheng Chung-ming. He was very religious and offered up prayers to Buddha daily begging him to destroy us.

## VII

February came round. We were on the eve of the first serious clash with the landowners. Chu-mow, one of the influential landowners, raised the rent on Yu-kung and five other tenants who tilled his land. They held the land on a permanent, hereditary lease.

According to this system the land

cannot be taken away nor the rent raised while the tenant pays the rent stipulated in the agreement concluded by his forefathers. The land-owner's demands were absolutely illegal, and the tenants consequently paid no attention to them. Chu-mow flew into a rage and sent his servants to bully Yu-kung. The servants started a row in Yu-kung's house. Yu-kung complained at once to the County Peasants' Union. He declared that in any case Chu-mow's oppression had become unbearable and that since the rent was to be raised he preferred to give up his land. The Peasants' Union granted Yu-kung's request.

Chu-mow grew still angrier. He knew that after a member of the Peasants' Union had given up a plot of land none of the local peasants would dare to work it.

He ordered Yu-kung and the others to return their plots to him. Next day Chu-mow appealed to the court. He accused Yu-kung and the rest of theft. The judge sent three of the police to summon the farmers. When the police arrived in Huannitan, the peasants had shut up their houses and run away. As soon as the police became aware that the peasants were frightened, they turned 'from foxes into tigers.' They arrested Yu-kung and the others, demanded six dollars for their trouble in doing so, two dollars for lodgings for the night (although the place was only twelve miles from the town and no expenses for lodgings were incurred), and one tael (about four dollars) for the summons. Yu-kung and the rest had never possessed such a sum, so they were beaten by the police and dragged off to a little townlet, Hunting. There Yu-kung pawned his clothes and gave

the money to the police as a bribe. Then he begged a local shopkeeper to guarantee that the rest of the money would be sent to the town the next day. After this he was set free.

The next day Yu-kung appeared at the Peasants' Union with the money and reported all that had happened. The Peasants' Union decided that if, after the payment of one tael for the summons, the police should demand more money, Yu-kung was to tell them that he had deposited his money with the Union and that all demands were, therefore, to be addressed to the Union. Then the Union gave instructions as to how he was to behave at the trial.

Yu-kung and the other five arrived at the court.

'You accuse these people,' said the judge to Chu-mow, 'of not returning the whole of your land to you, but you cannot show any evidence to support the charge. Since no proof is forthcoming, the charge must be dismissed as false.'

At first Chu-mow did not know what to say. Then he asserted that he had evidence and that he would bring it up next time. The trial was closed. The judge agreed to the request of Yu-kung that summonses should be sent through the Peasants' Union. And so the affair ended.

'Such a thing never happened before!' Chu-mow said to the other landowners. 'That a landowner should lose a case against a peasant! The Peasants' Union is undoubtedly responsible for my losing the case. We must do away with the Union.'

Chu-mow stirred up all the landowners living in Haifeng. The first to respond to his appeal was Chen Yuch-po, who gave a banquet in the

Chultsusi Temple. More than five hundred landowners and *shensbi* came to the feast. The feast was an impressive sight—long silk gowns and rich sleeveless jackets, gold-rimmed spectacles, gold watches and chains, round faces, and well-filled bellies.

Chen Yuch-po was in the chair. 'Communal property and communal wives—that is what the Peasants' Union is aiming at,' he announced. 'It is bribing the judges and insulting the landowners. Property must have an owner. This is the immutable law of heaven and earth. And this pest, Peng-pai, is stirring up the ignorant peasants and preparing an insurrection. If we don't take steps in time, both we and the government will suffer. If the landowners are unable to pay the land tax, the state treasury will soon be empty. But even the worst may happen—open revolt!'

The chairman's speech was greeted with thunderous applause. Wang Iso-sin, a landowner and one of the gentry, brought forward a proposal: 'Since the peasants have a union, we also must form a union, so as to resist the peasants.' This was unanimously approved.

When the judge, Chang Iso-fu, learned what had happened he got very frightened. Chen Kai-tin swore at him and demanded the immediate arrest of the peasants in question. Three days later Chang Iso-fu summoned Yu-kung and the five other peasants through the Peasants' Union.

## VIII

In view of the unexpectedness of the affair the Union called a special meeting. At first it was decided to send a representative to attend the inquiry.

This would have involved fulfilling certain formalities and there was no time. Besides, it was a civil case and until sentence was pronounced the accused could not be arrested. There was, therefore, nothing to prevent Yu-kung and the rest from appearing at the trial. We, for our part, would try to get into the court.

While we were making our preparations, we received the following notice: 'The Union for the Protection of Taxpayers has collected more than a hundred hooligans at the eastern and western gates of the town. They are lying in wait for you and as soon as you appear you will be beaten.'

Scouts were sent out. They confirmed the truth of this statement. Then it was resolved to send only the accused and to hold ourselves in readiness.

Between seventy and eighty of the most influential *shensbi* and landowners came to the trial. The judge lost his nerve. No actual inquiry was carried out, but the order was given to put Yu-kung and the others in chains and take them to prison. All the landowners left the court perfectly satisfied.

The Peasants' Union learned at once of the decision of the judge. If a judge arrests innocent people and shows no regard for the law, the public cannot recognize such a judge and must resort to force. An extraordinary meeting of all the local unions was held, and it was resolved to go to the court with a petition the next day.

That night we mobilized our forces. More than forty runners were sent about the whole county to notify the local unions that at 10 o'clock in the morning they must all gather at Lun Sho-pu.

The next day more than 6,000 people had collected there with flags in their hands.

Peng-pai, who opened the meeting, began: 'Our comrades have committed no crime, and still they have been arrested. The judge has no respect for the law. We must understand that this is not merely a question of Yu-kung but of all peasants. The defeat or victory of Yu-kung means the victory or defeat of more than 100,000 peasants. At this most critical moment we all must act decisively and as one man.'

'I understand—I understand,' said the judge, bobbing a deferential courtesy. 'Still, it will be necessary to summon both sides for the inquiry.'

Chu-mow then suggested that a representative of the Union for the Protection of Taxpayers should be allowed to be present during the trial. Chang agreed to this also.

'It seems to me that we have a fine chance in this struggle. If the landowners declare war on us, we shall destroy all the hedges between their fields. We shall turn all the plots into one great field, so that not a landowner will be able to find the boundary line of his land. I think we won't need to fight them then, they will fight among themselves.' This speech was greeted with shouts of approval.

Then the president spoke: 'Our Peasants' Union has prepared porridge for more than 6,000 people. Let's eat the porridge and start off for the court.'

When we had started, heavy rain came on. Up to then there had been a drought and the rain cheered the peasants.

When we got to the courthouse our way was blocked by armed soldiers.

We did not stop to argue with them, but broke through their ranks. The soldiers did not dare to fire on us. When we got up close to the hall, we elected twenty peasant delegates.

The judge locked his house and, accompanied by several armed officials of the court police, came out to negotiate with the delegates. He was extremely polite to them, offered them tea and cigarettes. Then he inquired the reason for our coming.

We presented the following demands: first, the peasants who had been arrested without reason were to be released; secondly, they were to be set at liberty with music and fire-crackers; and, thirdly, a public apology was to be made to the peasants.

'It was Chen Kai-tin who insisted on the imprisonment of the peasants,' said the judge, trying to justify himself as best he could. 'I couldn't do anything. Listen, Brother Pai, you know that we are the best of friends. Please take away the peasants and I'll set the prisoners free to-morrow.'

'This is no time for talking about friendship,' said Peng-pai. 'I've come here to speak to you as a representative of the peasants.'

The people waiting outside lost patience and just at that moment they shouted.

'Will you release the men or not? Give your answer at once!'

There was nothing more for the judge to do but to release the prisoners.

'Long live the peasantry! Down with the landowners!' The cries of six or seven thousand peasants shook the town.

We went along the chief street in a triumphal procession. The rain was coming down harder than ever. The

shouts of the peasants grew still louder. Heaven, it seemed, was favoring them! At the corner of every street students greeted the demonstration with cries of 'Long live our free peasant comrades!' and set off fireworks. This cheered the peasants up still more. When we returned to the offices of the County Peasants' Union, the sky had cleared.

## IX

The demonstration convinced the peasantry that the Union was their own organ, actually protecting their own interests. At the same time hatred of the landowning class increased. The Union's influence spread to all the neighboring counties. Such large numbers of people came to join the Union that there was not enough time to receive them all.

In the Isitsin, Wuhuak, Hueian, and Lufeng counties the members of the Peasants' Union increased every day. Then the Haifeng County Union became the Huaichou General Union and county unions were formed in each county. In less than two months' time the movement spread to the Chaochou, Punin, and Huailai counties. At length the Kwangtung Provincial Peasants' Union arose. Every day from three to four hundred peasants had to be received on various matters. Fortunately the number of comrades taking part in the organization work also increased.

The Union for the Protection of Taxpayers organized by the Haifeng gentry, the landowners, and all the upper classes was terrified by the unheard-of demonstration and the freeing of the arrested peasants. At the same time all the members of the

Peasants' Union announced that the rice for the rent lay in the peasants' granaries and that if the landowners dared to attack them all the boundaries between the fields would be done away with. At this the Taxpayers' Union quieted down. Chen Yuch-po, the president of the union, together with the other superstitious gentry, began to pray to Pu-sa [a Buddhist saint] to show them some means of resisting the Peasants' Union. They organized *fu-luan* [a spiritistic séance] in the Huan-lao Temple. The 'spirit' of a Shanti when appealed to wrote the characters: 'The Peasants' Union will undoubtedly be victorious.' The landowners and the gentry hung their heads in despair.

The next day Chen Yuch-po called a general meeting of the Taxpayers' Union. More than a hundred people were present. Chen Yuch-po announced at once that he wished to resign as president of the union, and gave the following explanation: 'Yesterday we held a spiritistic séance. The spirit that appeared in response to our summons, Juan-tian Shanti, said that the Peasants' Union would conquer. The spirit also wrote a verse that concluded: "May Han-yu grow and prosper." [Han-yu was Peng-pai's former name.] To go against what Juan-tian Shanti said is impossible. Furthermore I asked Juan-tian Shanti how I should act. He ordered me to go to Hong-Kong. I shall remain two days more in Haifeng and then retire.'

Two days later Chen Yuch-po left for Hong-Kong. Fearing the power of the Peasants' Union, Chen had arranged the séance purposely, so as to justify his flight. After his departure the Union for the Protection of Taxpayers was dropped.

Ortega y Gasset tells an interviewer that there is no danger of Bolshevism in Spain and then a Spanish reporter on a Republican newspaper gives some first-hand views of life among the peasants.

# Through Spanish Eyes

TWO SPANIARDS  
ON SPAIN

## I. ORTEGA ON BOLSHEVISM

By F. DE CLES

Translated from the *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna Liberal Daily

MORE and more red flags bearing the sickle and hammer are flying in the industrial section of Catalonia, in Andalusia, and even in eastern Aragon and the city of Madrid. Hardly a day goes by that does not witness serious gun-fire between a group of *revolteros* and the Guardia Civil. Hardly a day goes by on which a howling mob does not demand revolution in some part of the country. At the present moment the radicals are marching through the street demonstrating for a general strike. 'Huelga, huelga, queremos la huelga general! (Strike, strike, we demand a general strike!)'

On the main artery of Madrid, which used to be called simply the 'Gran Via' but which now bears the

more pretentious title of 'Avenida Pi y Margall,' the philosopher, Ortega y Gasset, has his study. Ortega y Gasset is one of the few Spaniards of truly European proportions. When you meet him you confront a man who is as much at home in Berlin as he is in Madrid or Paris. Ortega is a profound student of European culture and of its thinkers, poets, and statesmen. His mind ranges freely and welcomes all that is new. But this description does not fully characterize the Spanish philosopher and publicist. Ortega's books, notably his *Revolt of the Masses*, have established him as the most completely alive man in modern Spain. Knowledge and the most penetrating realism are the goals that

Ortega has set himself in all his intellectual activity. He wants clear, precise formulæ, he hates everything nebulous, qualified, and variable.

The question, 'Is some form of Bolshevism conceivable in Spain?' does not, therefore, satisfy him. What is Bolshevism? Is there any living man with a clear conception of this idea? No. Bolshevism is a system which was worked out theoretically in the Occident, but it remained for an Eastern nation to take over this system, remodel it, and apply it to reality in an Eastern guise. What will emerge no man can tell, but at least we know that there can be no such thing as Bolshevism outside Russia. To try to apply this idea to Spain shows a complete misunderstanding of all the principles of Bolshevism as well as of the fundamental aspects of Spain.

'Good. But do you think a proletarian dictatorship is possible in Spain under Communist leadership?'

'No,' Ortega replied. 'And if you look at Spanish history you will see why we shall not have any revolution for a long time now. For what you hear out there on the street does n't count. Of course, there are Communist agitators and there are certain people who listen to them, but that is of no importance, even if tragic conflicts do result. For the great masses in Spain do not desire any such thing but are disinclined to all experiments in this direction.'

## II

'Look at our last revolution. Spain had had a monarchy for centuries. It had seen good rulers and bad and there had been occasional uprisings, but there had not been a real revolu-

tion against the monarchist régime for sixty years. Then suddenly, in the spring of 1931, a completely non-political election showed that the whole nation had silently abandoned the principle of monarchy, that the monarchy in Spain was supported by only seven per cent of the whole population. In what other European country could this have happened? Where else would such a shift of public thought and sentiment not have taken the form of upheavals and earthquakes? Does n't this seem incredible to you?

'But there, you see, is the key to the understanding of Spain. The Spaniard does not recognize any opposition. The Spanish people are typically governmental. In Italy, Germany, and France the situation is quite different. Take the French, for instance. When the young Frenchman begins to think and build a world system for himself, he automatically encounters two conflicting ideas that have been handed down as a national heritage. On the one hand is the powerful, national tradition, with its typically French Catholicism, and, on the other hand, equally typical French skepticism, utterly untrammeled anticlericalism, in other words, Voltaire.

'Both are fundamentally French but they struggle against each other so hard that very few people succeed in synthesizing them. Throughout German, French, and Italian history you witness two opposing forces in conflict and the sum of these forces gives you the whole. Not so in Spain. Since the time of the Moors there has been no real opposition here, no opposition that was in a position to rival the dominating principle. In Spain

the whole nation is either for or against a principle, and that is why I have said that the Spaniard is the most governmentally inclined man on our continent. He leaves politics to the government and lives his individual life in the shadow of the government, keeping himself as free from it as possible. Only when a new life form has arisen and the old one has become irksome does he intervene, and he does so then *en masse*.

'Look at the present dissensions from this point of view. You will discover that attempts are being made to introduce something to the Spanish people, but it takes root only in eastern Catalonia, in the south, and in the Basque country. Catalonia has struggled for five hundred years to free itself from the rule of Castile. Any idea opposed to Castilian hegemony is therefore welcome. And do not fail to note that the attitude of Murcia reflects in part the opinion of its syndicalist industrialist workers, who also come from the south. Naturally, these people want to be rewarded for what they have done and they are disgusted now because Catalonian autonomy would not do them any good. As for the south, it has the most fruitful kind of soil for revolutionary activity. Many of the

inhabitants are of Moorish descent and have never absorbed Spanish civilization, or else they are immigrants from Africa to whom Spanish civilization seems foreign and oppressive. The result is that under the trappings of Bolshevik revolution a very different struggle is going on to-day, the ancient struggle of the people of African origin against an Occidental civilization that is foreign to them.

'So much for the left opposition. The right opposition has its base in the Basque country. The Basque is a rival of the Castilian. Furthermore, the Basque is a typical peasant, whereas the Castilian is a city dweller, and the peasant is always a conservative. He hates change and is opposed to anything new unless he has tested it fully and then he adheres to it more firmly than anybody else.

'You want a prophecy. Well, the left opposition will fail because it lacks universal appeal and the right opposition will fail for the same reason. Whether democracy will remain in its present form or whether a peculiar Spanish type of democracy will develop that will be different in some respects, perhaps in some important respects, from the French model, cannot be foretold to-day.'

## II. PEASANTS OF SPAIN

Translated from *El Sol*, Madrid Republican Daily

**T**H E bridge now lies behind us, with its thirty-two monumental arches leading to the great country town of Badajoz over the singing Guadiana River that tumbles between treeless meadows where herds of cows and sheep graze placidly. Face to face

across the Plaza de la República the cathedral and the townhall confront each other. The cathedral is a dark pile the color of tarnished silver, tinged with green on its ledges by light growths of moss. Its windows, towers, and buttresses remind one of

an old feudal castle with crenelated walls. Rising imposingly among the little houses of the city as if suspended from the low, damp clouds, it evokes a martial, mystical past of military orders and Portuguese-frontier romances. The bells thunder an interminable lament. When I ask the reason for this endless tolling I am told, 'A canon is dead. He has gone to his rest at last.'

These words are spoken by one of the group of a hundred or more workers that has assembled at the door of the townhall. Their faces and hands are blackened by the sun of the fields; their bright, rabbit eyes are sunk in dark circles of anxiety. They wear jackets of olive-green cloth ragged with wear, and most of them have broad-brimmed hats. Hoarse voices engage in low-pitched conversation. It is raining. The great clamor of the bells fills the plaza. At last a canon is going to his rest.

Peasants come here every day in the hope of finding work, work in the fields. The municipality of Badajoz, which comprises four hundred and twenty thousand acres, is the largest in Spain. A thousand agricultural workers are registered in the city census as living within the city limits, and according to the law only these workers are eligible for jobs. Badajoz should be able to provide work for over five thousand men, but actually two hundred of these thousand workers have nothing to do and are forced to remain idle.

Herds of cows and sheep graze off the rich, treeless meadows of the Guadiana valley. Thousands of acres are given over to pasturage. Large proprietors profit from the earth and the grass of the earth as irrationally

and primitively as if we still lived in the remote days of the shepherd kings. They complain noisily when the Republican authorities make the slightest reference to the duty of giving work to the unemployed. When any official order infringes on their dogmatic and unshakable notions of property they feel hunted and hampered, victims of a vast persecution. They have had severe lessons. Some of them have been brought to their senses by being fined. Many, however, still refuse to come to terms and promote the necessary social harmony. Must they provide work and wages? Well, they will not, unless a stronger force. . . . But there is a stronger force opposed to this attitude: the laws of the Republic and the authorities charged with executing these laws. The landowners struggle in every possible way against this force, against any attempt to do away with their unjust privileges.

## II

A thin, pale man wrapped in a cloak walks to the townhall in the rain. He has a Celtic profile and the watchful eyes of a bird. He passes through the group of workers with the hurried air of one who is keeping an important engagement. The workers break off talking and point at him. 'That's the Governor General.'

Don Luis Peña Novo, the supreme authority of the Republic in Estremadura, is now in his office, a little room next to the meeting hall. The hall is full of people. They have come from the villages, each with his own trouble and complaint to lay before the Governor General.

The hall, whose balconies overlook

the Plaza, is a spacious room decorated with cheap portraits of the illustrious men of Badajoz. Short Latin and Spanish mottoes on the walls allude to the importance of history in the life of nations. The presidential table stands on a dais under a red canopy that shields a loud print depicting the birth of the Republic in allegorical form. The curtains are red and the chairs of the councilors are upholstered in deep, ox-blood red. Two secretaries busily sort out papers at the table, while some forty citizens explain various matters to them. Workers and employers go over facts and make reports in melodramatic tones. All the unrest of the countryside, of the western towns, is concentrated in this hall, and the individuals present translate it into words. Similar messages also come in from villages in the mountains and valleys over the telephone, which rings constantly. At this very moment most of the townhalls in the region are being invaded by considerable groups of unemployed workers. Peacefully, the parades gather under the protection of the municipal building, which the workers have conquered as free men. They have won freedom, but they have not yet won land or the assurance of bread earned by labor.

Workers and employers argue over the ownership and cultivation of the land. And while they await the change that is to transform the Spanish countryside and the men that live and struggle on it—a change that has already been legally sanctioned—they are consumed with impatience.

Formerly the peasant languished on soil that he did not own, crushed by the bitterest resignation. He received the wage of a slave and patriarchal

treatment from the lords of the earth—a wretched meal and two reales a day. But now the peasants are defending their right to a higher standard of living and believe that the era of the patriarch is over. The old landowners are quick to defend their own interests. They rush to the authorities. Each protest from a worker is matched by twenty protests from the landowners. How do the latter defend themselves?

Here is a very correct man dressed in black with a white collar and a black tie. He is a village notary. He paces restlessly about the hall, then draws one of the secretaries aside. 'I've come to report to the Governor General that the workers of the village refuse to harvest the olives.'

'Why?' asks the secretary.

'How should I know?'

'Are they paid the minimum wage? Four-fifty?'

'I don't know . . . many have been hired at three pesetas.'

'But, in harvesting the olives, owners and workers should adjust their differences according to the basis agreed upon.'

'Certainly,' interrupts a worker. 'They want the olives harvested for three pesetas without reference to the agreement. That's why the men won't work.'

The well-behaved man goes away spluttering, 'This socialist tyranny.'

Another gentleman with a moustache shouts and waves an official paper in his left hand. 'What do you think of this?' he asks me and anyone else who cares to listen. 'I have leased some property in Hornachos but the tenants refuse to sow the soil. They want to force me to sow it. Well, I won't.'

A secretary says to him, 'Make an effort. Land cannot remain idle because of the whim of its owner.'

'But what do I know about sowing? I won't do it and that's final. Even if I have to pay a fine. I'm not going to buy twelve pairs of horses, which is what I would need to work the land.'

Loud words. Personal remarks. Protests. The verbal wrestling of old-fashioned politicians.

Delegations from the villages come dressed in their holiday clothes. They sit in the big, red-plush chairs waiting to speak to the Governor General. To look at them one would think they were very well satisfied. What matters are they going to lay before him? Questions about work and the land.

Owners and workers, engineers and officials, judges, lawyers, and registrars of property attack these questions. In the cities, in the villages, in the workers' settlements, in the straw huts of the fields, more wretched than the Russian *istbas*, two words resound, 'agrarian reform.' The peasants dream of them with hope and illusion, the landowners with the blackest of fears. The peasants are ready to defend what they have won by any means; the landowners are engaged in a desperate struggle to maintain their privileges. The authority of the Republic is calmly disposed to translate the law into reality for the benefit of the general interest.

At this moment, before the reform has been put into effect, one observes great unrest in Estremadura. The law-abiding elements are extremely alarmed about attacks on estates, thefts of olives and acorns, and cattle-stealing. In the places where these incidents have occurred, the workers'

organizations generally suffer from a lack of sufficient control on the part of their leaders. The masses of peasants are restless over the delay in realizing agrarian reform and allow themselves to be carried away easily by extremist elements that incite them to mass action.

### III

Talavera la Real is an important town. Formerly, such places were considered well to do, but their prosperity was confined to eight or ten families. Perhaps ten more families lived in the shadow of this wealth. Nestling on the right bank of the Guadiana, Talavera presents a pretty picture. There are splendid trees. The houses, which are situated on hills, are surrounded by gardens. Well-cultivated fields spread to the near-by river with patches of grazing ground. There are cows and sheep and many churches. This town, also, has its Plaza de la República as well as a People's House.

I was told that in Talavera la Real, which is near Badajoz, people are very rebellious. There is no work. Formerly, no complaints appeared in the newspapers, those harbingers of unrest. People lived in peace. Before the Dictatorship the political bosses preserved order and no one dared disturb it. They maintained themselves in power at all costs, backed by the resources of the Government and enjoying the determined protection of the repressive instruments of the monarchic state. Nobody budged without their permission. Malcontents were refused jobs and forced to emigrate. The situation remained the same under the Dictatorship. Perhaps the political leaders felt stronger than

ever before. They believed that their authority and the public order were fully guaranteed.

But then something happened that puzzled both the so-called orderly people in Talavera la Real and the masses of workers and peasants who served them. Some men from Badajoz arrived, well-known, respectable gentlemen. Some of them were known to be individuals with advanced ideas, but they were gentlemen. Why had they come to Talavera? To hold a meeting. A meeting! Such a thing had never happened before in Talavera. It was led from the balcony of a large house facing the Plaza. The orators' words alarmed the authorities and their families and stupefied the considerable crowd that had gathered. The propagandists said terrible things. They exalted the workers violently and attacked the bosses of the Monarchy and the Dictatorship.

One young orator stood out from among the rest by insulting something as serious and tangible as the person of the King. He threatened to unleash a violent revolution and proclaimed that the liberty of a people was worth the blood of all the tyrants, great and petty, of Spain. He urged the crowd, which was frozen into a state of stupor, to hurl themselves into the revolution. Finally he addressed the workers in spirited words. 'The land,' he said, 'must belong to those who till it. The Republic will install a new régime of greater social justice, giving the land to him who cultivates it.'

The crowd applauded these last words almost instinctively, while the political bosses, who were listening sharply from near by, scratched their heads. They thought of holding an immediate conference of all the au-

thorities. So the newspapers were right. Communism was at the gates. The advancing revolutionary wave must be opposed by every means. The first step should be to prohibit meetings. Such affairs were dangerous. They sowed discontent and alarm everywhere. Infernal snakes and toads leaped from the mouths of the orators. Fewer meetings and more Catholic missions. A Jesuit father should be summoned from Badajoz to dissipate with his words—all peace and love—the pestilential and poisonous utterances of the Republican orator. The Republic? As if a Republic were possible without anarchy!

But among the peasantry the Republican sermon had the opposite effect. 'The land must belong to those who till it'—the formula was simple and clear. How many hands tilled the soil in Talavera la Real? About 2,500 out of the 3,900 inhabitants of the town. They tilled 14,235 acres, of which 7,146 belonged—and still belong—to gentlemen whom the population knew solely by name.

#### IV

In Talavera la Real the Republic won a bloodless victory, and how much the town has witnessed within a few months! The people were promised the overthrow of the Monarchy, the right of the town to govern itself freely, laws of greater social justice. They were told that the system of land ownership would be changed, that the influence of the old bosses would be annihilated. And all this has been realized.

'We have a right to all this and to much more,' I was told. 'When the newspapers describe a new division

of the land the right is on our side. Why don't they admit it? As far as the authority of the proprietors is concerned, the less said the better.'

'But you are now abusing the old leaders. I heard that the other day a donkey with a great wooden cross tied to it entered the church while the faithful were observing the novena of the Virgin Mary.'

'Don't pay any attention to such stories. Of course such things should n't happen. But the old leaders are trying to spite the workers and the Republic. They don't give work even when men are needed. They complain to the civil government no matter what we do. We wish to live in peace, retaining our rights, of course, and they want war. They will have to be crushed. And what hatred inspires the words and deeds of the peasants! It is a bitter, implacable hatred, arising from hunger and misery, and it lends itself to a terrible revenge for their accumulated wrongs. Have they been educated? Have they even been treated like human beings? The jobs they used to get were like charity. For a long time their purest and most natural sentiments have been outraged. Their day's wage has been thrown to them like a crust to a dog.'

They live in houses where every inconvenience and every sign of poverty exist. What are they going to do now, when they are discovering every day that they are equal before the law to their most powerful neighbor?'

'Some people in the town,' an agricultural worker told me, 'said that everything would be the same under the Republic, that the old leaders would stay in power. What a story! If they disobey they are roasted with fines. The same people say that the agrarian reform is just another myth. I don't know. I've heard that surveyors are going around with their instruments partitioning the land. It is about time for the reform to be put into effect, because, if it is n't, I don't know what will happen.'

The peasant feels an enormous, uncontrollable desire to possess land, even if it is only leased to him. He can put up with anything if he is given land, no matter how little, to till and cultivate. The greatest difficulty involved in the great national enterprise of reapportioning the fields of Extremadura is to make the desires of the peasants and their inflamed passion for land bow to the inevitably slow steps of reform.

# Persons and Personages

JOHN GALSWORTHY

By DESMOND MACCARTHY

From the *Sunday Times*, London Conservative Sunday Paper

ON THE MORNING of George Moore's death, Saturday, January 21, I wrote a brief notice for the *Sunday Times*, and that evening, through the British Broadcasting Corporation, I spoke my 'hail and farewell' to him as an artist. These were not estimates of his work—they could not be; they were gestures of admiration that I could make with ease and sincerity.

On January 31 an author of far wider fame died, John Galsworthy; and, since I occupy a position of some prominence on this paper, it falls to me to comment also upon him. But from me commentary in this case must differ from a funeral oration; it must be criticism, and some of it will inevitably for a little while seem ungenerous. It soothes my embarrassment, however, to reflect that even during these few last days so many will have read so many times so many things written in his praise that already there is no need to muffle the voice of an *advocatus diaboli*. Sooner or later, before every canonization is completed, he must be heard. Why should he not then speak at once? At any rate, I must leave my apology at that. My eye has already noticed among these eulogies such phrases as 'his brush is that of Rembrandt, not that of Michelangelo'; encouraged, the devil's advocate proceeds.

Among his world-famous contemporaries the case of Galsworthy is most curious in that there was with him a wider gap between merit and reputation than with the others. It was not that his merits were small, but that his reputation was colossal. I am not speaking of sales or popularity—these we know bear an uncertain relation to achievement—but of fervid admiration, both here and abroad. He was a very good writer of the second class who had the renown of a master, a genius, an artist. How did it happen? He did nothing himself to foster such exaggerations; his career was one of exemplary detachment. The presidency of the Pen Club, whose members frequently entertain distinguished foreigners, may have helped in some measure toward his obtaining the Nobel Prize, but how little that must have counted those who have traveled recently on the Continent, loitered by foreign railway stalls or in foreign bookshops, talked with Germans, Frenchmen, or Scandinavians about English authors are in a position to understand. No pardonable misapprehensions

on the part of bewildered and gratified visitors as to the representative status of the Pen Club can account for those piles of translations, or for the universal alacrity with which it is assumed abroad that if you are interested in literature you must think Galsworthy a great writer.

The foreigner supposes that when he reads Galsworthy he is understanding the English at last, that when he follows the Forsytes he is watching the very pulse of the machine. His instant response to figures, so emphatically projected as types, conceals from him their lack of individual vitality, and the author's attitude toward them (that tone of a severe and scrupulous judge) prevents him from noticing that Galsworthy's satire invariably relents toward sentiment. Yet the foreigner concluded here at last was an unflinching dissector of the propertied Philistine backbone of England! Even MM. Legouis and Cazamian praise Galsworthy for 'boldness' and depth. It is hard to convince foreigners that in the days when they were content with the certainly perfunctory diagnosis that all Englishmen were 'mad' they were in a way nearer to truth than after reading *The Forsyte Saga*. That diagnosis was at least a pot shot at the core of erratic emotional independence beneath conventional repressions, at that inner—not external—spontaneity of feeling which Galsworthy's characters notably fail to reflect.

ONE peculiarity of the Englishman is that you can so seldom count on his being true to type. Yet one of the most general characteristics of the Galsworthian picture of England is that everybody, even the artist-rebel (who by the by is neither a *real* rebel nor a *real* artist), behaves and speaks typically. The element of the unexpected is what I miss in the characters both in his plays and in his novels. Again, that strong family cohesion, the joint-stock company spirit, which, in spite of defections from it, is the soul of *The Forsyte Saga*, is really more characteristic of France than England. (Perhaps this explains why, there, it was so readily recognized.) Forsyte groups no doubt exist, but in no country is indifference to family unity more common than in England.

There was one circumstance that ought to have enlightened readers abroad who hailed Galsworthy as an unsparing critic of the conventional possessive Englishman: his immense popularity at home. No writer of the kind who really hits the mark is effusively and at once accepted in his own country. Galsworthy drew propertied Englishmen, not as they are, but as they can stand seeing themselves at moments when they are prepared to admit, with a humility that hardly perturbs them, that they certainly have grave faults. No Englishman objects to being depicted as an obstinate oak of a man, gnarled and set in prejudice, putting forth perhaps in old age some tender, sunlit leaves, or to being described as pig-headed, a Philistine, dominated by a ruthless sense of material val-

ues, for those are not his radical faults, not those which make him wince if they are probed. No Irishman objects to being satirized as a feckless fellow, no one's enemy but his own, as one too imaginative to act, too spontaneous to look ahead. But if an Irishman touches the real national defects, lack of moral courage and cruelty, it will be some time before he is hailed in Erin as an author of whom his countrymen may well be proud. Frenchmen feel quite friendly to their own novelists who depict them as volatile and lascivious, but hardly any talent will make a writer popular in France who mocks French stinginess and blind, vindictive self-assertion.

English faults have not such precise abusive names, nevertheless they are disgusting. They can be indicated: an incurable determination in the face of truth, honor, art, to have things both ways (the nearest curse word for this is hypocrisy, though that is far too crude), and an impenetrable self-complacency—smugness for short, smugness moral and intellectual. The popularity of Galsworthy in England ought to have suggested to foreigners that his exposure of English character and society did not really go deep. But did he not lash smugness in the Forsytes? Yes, but—here speaks the devil's advocate—this exposure was not entirely free from it. He yielded to the desire to have things both ways; to champion passion, for instance, yet call it 'love of beauty.' He defined Irene and the part she played in the Forsyte drama as 'a concretion of disturbing beauty impinging on a possessive world.' He wanted to envisage the struggle as one between *beauty* and possessiveness. It made it nobler. But he would have done 'beauty,' and incidentally drawn his artist-rebels, far better if he had recognized the real nature of the struggle—possessiveness versus sex.

HIS predominant characteristics as a dramatist were an admirable clarity in construction and an effective, but in the end disappointing, understatement of emotion in dialogue; he worked colloquial inexpressiveness on the stage too hard. His characters were never complex, his situations were never definite, and his intention was never clear. In those respects he resembled Brieux. Both dramatists were essentially demonstrators; both found inspiration in social problems. In both a love of justice created an atmosphere peculiar to their plays.

His dramatic aim seemed to be not to make us live in his people but to make us fair-minded toward them. The result was that though the power to rouse indignation and pity was within his scope, tragic feeling and free comedy were not. It was as though he had been satisfied once he had done equal justice to everybody, although he had not done complete, or, if you will, artistic or poetic, justice to anybody. His characters were drawn with admirable clearness, but he seemed more interested in

them as 'cases' than as individuals. The temptation to which he yielded as a creator was to think more about the representative value of his characters than about character itself. It is all to the good that a play or novel should have a 'moral.' That is to say, that it should have a bearing upon life as we have observed it, and that an author's mind should be full of the general woe or joy of the world. But only on condition that, when once he sits down to write, his interest in his people exceeds everything else. It was in this respect that, though we could still honor him as a reformer, Galsworthy failed.

He never wrote a better play than his first. *The Silver Box* was a modest little realistic drama, perfectly contrived to bring out an ironic contrast and a social moral. He often showed that the law was an ass and cruel at that, but though he did so afterward by more violent appeals to our commiseration for its victims, he did not achieve his end so well in *Justice* or *Escape*. *The Pigeon* stands high among his plays because in it he dropped that craving to be fair, and allowed all his tender nature to rush, in welcome not in pity, toward a character of his creating. There may be qualities more inspiring in human nature, but there are none more moving to contemplate than an unalterable natural kindness. The pigeon himself was an embodiment of it. Galsworthy knew how little this loving-kindness can achieve.

Wellwyn was not a saver of souls, he could not make wasters pull themselves together. He was not interested in people because they were citizens or immortal souls, but because he could not help liking them very much as they were—even when he wished they were different. To his exasperated daughter he seemed 'a sickly sentimental'ist.' He was shocked by misery and unhappiness, being equable and gay himself, but he could not be disgusted with human beings, however they behaved. Though the Wellwyns are no use in righting wrongs or putting things straight; though philanthropists and reformers agree that they do harm by 'indiscriminate charity,' what they do give—and they are the only people who give it to those most starved for it—is affection in which there is neither forethought nor afterthought, neither patronage nor criticism.

There was a good deal of Wellwyn in Galsworthy himself, but he wanted first to be sensible and a just critic of social life; the Wellwyn in him, so to speak, only trickled out in a sentimentality that often spoiled his work or made him concentrate too much for an artist on rousing pity. Mr. Shanks has said that 'his main characteristic was zealousness in the cause of the under dog, tempered with a wide charity for the top dog—a combination which to most of us is impossible.' That was the Wellwyn in his struggling for free expression; emotionally he had to let people off, even Soames (his triumph in characterization) in the end. Mr. Shanks is

wrong in thinking such division of sympathy is rare. It is found, for example, in every good magistrate. Art demands that a writer should find his centre, or that he should write at any rate at the moment, from some unchecked impulse in himself. Galsworthy's mind was full of checks and glosses. He wanted to combine the passionate sympathizer with the calmness of the judge. Very, very hard to do. I have used a phrase to place him, 'a very good writer of the second class,' one which sounds offensive only because the currency of praise has been so absurdly debased, since in his work the sympathetic magistrate strikes me as having triumphed over the intuitive artist.

### AN EVENING WITH MARCEL PROUST

*By EDMOND JALOUX*

Translated from *Le Temps*, Paris Semiofficial Daily

MARCEL PROUST has been dead ten years, and his glory during this decade has never ceased to spread and grow. In fact, it has become so great that it has transcended its original sphere and is now a universal phenomenon. Furthermore, since 1930, snobbishness, exhausted from twelve years of effort, has led a languishing existence, awaiting better days when it will be able to set off more fireworks.

My memories of Marcel Proust cover many years. I saw his name for the first time in a *Revue Blanche* of 1893 which published a few short essays that have since appeared in *Les Plaisirs et les jours*—light pages full of charm, imbued with intelligence and melancholy. They pleased me more than I can say. That was the period of my great literary discoveries. I remember that one of the essays bore the following dedication, which has been removed from the book's final edition: 'To my three dear little Roberts: Robert Proust, Robert de Flers, and Robert de Billy.' When *Les Plaisirs et les jours* appeared, I read with deep admiration (and this admiration has never weakened) 'La Fin de la jalouse', 'La Mort de Baltassare', 'Sylvande, prince de Sylvanie', 'La Confession d'une jeune fille', and 'Regrets et rêveries.' The dedication of *Les Plaisirs et les jours* contained this sentence, which foreshadowed *A la Recherche du temps perdu*: 'I have only portrayed immorality in characters who possess delicate consciences. Thus, too weak to desire virtue, too noble to enjoy evil fully, familiar only with suffering, these characters have been described by me with such sincere pity that it has purified these little essays.'

Admirable as these first pages were, one could n't guess that they contained an inexhaustibly rich subject-matter, partly concealed be-

neath a refined and almost frozen exterior. But because I admired Proust's works, from the moment I began to write I sent him my books. The first letter I have from him dates back to 1901 and it is full of gracious compliments, delicate consideration, ingenious and clever flattery. Do not think that I mention this because it has to do with myself. No, my purpose is quite different. When the letters of Proust to Robert de Montesquiou and the Countess of Noailles appeared, people at once referred to his snobbishness and made fun of the ingenuousness—or the excessive benevolence—of his complimentary remarks. What I am attempting to point out is that he showed the same fervor, the same graciousness, the same genius for compliments to a young, unknown writer who lived in a small city, of whom he knew nothing and whom he would probably never see. I had sent him a story in which all the characters bore amusing and unusual names. He wrote to me: 'They say that on the day of creation (I think it is in Genesis) the Eternal spent his time naming all the creatures. That was a duty he should have given you.' In Marcel Proust there was an eternal desire to please, to make himself agreeable to all those with whom he came in contact. One must emphasize this, because a lot of people who never knew him have recently begun to judge him in the most absurd fashion.

I was not destined to meet him for a long time after this first exchange of letters. I was seldom in Paris; he himself lived in solitude, occupied with tasks as minutely regulated as religious rites. I caught sight of him once, without being presented, at the Russian Ballet. Buried in his fur coat, he was following the movements of the ballet with his unforgettable eyes; then he disappeared suddenly, fearing, no doubt, that he would be caught right in a draft by some bore.

OUR first meeting dates back to 1917, when he invited me to dinner one night at the Ritz with the Duke of Gramont, who was also duke of Guiche, and Paul Morand. Proust did not appear until after nine and then immediately began to relate one of the habitual dramas of his life. Having arisen late,—that is, at the end of the afternoon,—he had had great trouble finding a barber; all the stores were closed. No one had been willing to come to shave him. His chauffeur had to use all the wiles and energy in the world to find a barber's assistant who was willing to go to Proust's home. The recital of this intimate little adventure having occupied him during a great part of the dinner, he then began to question each one of us with great courtesy.

It is hard for anyone who has not known Marcel Proust to imagine him, and it is no less difficult to describe him. There was in his appearance, in the atmosphere around him, something so singular that he aroused a sensation of astonishment, almost of stupor. He did not belong

to the ordinary run of mankind. He seemed to emerge from some nightmare, some other century, perhaps some other world. But which? He had never been able to renounce the style of his younger days: high, stiff collar, heavy shirt front, low-cut waistcoat, and boating tie. He would walk toward you with a sort of awkward slowness. He did not present himself to you; he appeared. It was impossible for you not to turn around to look at him, not to be struck by his extraordinary aspect.

He was rather heavy, with a full face, and the first thing you noticed about him was his eyes—remarkable eyes, feminine, Oriental eyes whose tender, ardent, caressing, but passive expression reminded you of a deer or antelope. The upper eyelids were slightly veiled (like those of Jean Lorrain) and the eyes were surrounded by dark rings so definitely marked that they gave him an air at once impassioned and sickly. His bushy black hair was always too long and looked like a heavy skullcap. The exaggerated development of his chest was also surprising. It bulged out in front in such a way that Léon Daudet once compared it to the breastbone of a chicken. In this respect, too, Proust resembled Jean Lorrain.

To tell the truth, this description is far from satisfactory. It lacks that certain something peculiar to him, that mixture of physical heaviness and airy grace of speech and thought, of formal politeness and abandon, of apparent force and femininity, of reticence, uncertainty, and heedlessness. He gave the impression that he was being polite only so as to be better able to escape, to retire to some secret place, to the tortured mystery of his mind. You felt as if you were confronting a child and a very old Chinese mandarin rolled into one. During the entire dinner he was lively, talkative, and charming—as he always was when he was not complaining. He had a very pleasant laugh that would burst forth suddenly and that he would at once hide behind his hand, like a school-child scared of his teacher. Did he think that his gaiety was such an amazing phenomenon that he wanted to hide it, or did this gesture possess a more immediate significance?

The Duke of Guiche and Paul Morand left soon after dinner and I remained alone with Marcel Proust in the long hall of the Ritz. At that time the Germans were making raids on Paris and severe police regulations kept the whole city in darkness. We did not yet know that aviators were quietly following the course of the Seine, which is always visible at night, so that they did not need lights to tell exactly where they were. We were thus plunged in absolute darkness that was pierced from time to time by the red tip of an American's cigar.

Thus I was able to enjoy an intimate and fascinating conversation with the author of *Un Amour de Swann*, one of those marvelous conversations in which one can talk on indefinitely thanks to the darkness,

which so kindly hides the scrutinizing gaze that may reduce one to silence, a conversation when one talks to one's self as well as to one's listener. Marcel Proust questioned me at great length and with great regard to detail, asking me about many contemporaries, especially a few social personages in whom he was particularly interested. I don't think it would have been possible to have approached him under more symbolic circumstances.

WHENEVER I saw him subsequently I never failed to feel strangely moved by that eternal effusion which seemed to spring from his heart and which is also evident in his letters and in some passages of his great novel. Since he was always ill and in pain, there was something 'genteel' about his life and the way he loved his friends—and I intend the word to have the meaning that the Middle Ages gave it. He was also, it is true, extremely sensitive, but when one thinks of the care he took not only never to hurt anyone, but to improve on his countless ways of being agreeable, one is not surprised that he was often astonished or indignant at the indifference, brutality, or *sans gêne* that some people who loved him very much showed him. But these people, who had to live first and take their place in the world, did not possess the courtesy and refinement of his exquisite soul, nor did they have as much time as he, that great empty space of time which surrounds the sick person and affords him the opportunity to develop to the fullest extent that which is most charming in him.

Alas, this disease, of which he talked so much that hardly anybody believed in it, finally got the better of Marcel Proust, and the last time that I saw him was as he lay dead in that dingy room in which he finished *A la Recherche du temps perdu*. No scene could have been more naked, more sordid. The room's only ornament was the stack of notebooks, piled on the mantelpiece, which contained the manuscript of his work. The doors were scratched and dirty; big strips of torn wall paper hung from the walls.

I had the impression that Marcel Proust, lying on his bed, was more dead than most dead people. His face did not have that relaxed smile, that peace, which some dead faces possess. Nor did it have the gruesome grin I have seen on some others. There was no expression at all. His thin, hollow face, darkened by the beard that had grown during his last illness, was surrounded by the greenish shadows that certain Spanish painters have spread around the heads of their corpses. A large bunch of Parma violets rested on his chest.

When we come face to face with the dead that we have loved, we feel in spite of ourselves a certain familiarity with them. They have not yet departed completely; they still seem bound to us by certain ties. But the

most extraordinary solitude seemed to dwell around Marcel Proust. One instantly felt that he was very far away, not only because he was dead but because he had lived such a different life, because the world of research, imagination, and sensitiveness in which he had lived was not ours; because he had suffered from strange ills, and because his mind, to nourish itself, had required unusual sorrow and meditation unfamiliar to the average man. And, as he had been different in life, so was he different in death. The grief his friends felt captured some of the indefinable majesty that emanated from his motionless head and that we find to-day on every page of his work.

## JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH

By ERWIN RIEGER

Translated from the *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna Liberal Daily

**A**SQUARE face with a high forehead, a penetrating gaze, a strong chin, sensitive lips that twitch involuntarily, well-shaped ears made to hear well. A sharp laugh that spares no weakness. A body that is always on guard and ready to attack, yet that never seems too tense or too loose.' That is the way Luc Durtain once described his friend and companion-in-arms, Jean-Richard Bloch, who is still under fifty years of age and is already one of the few contemporary French writers with a European reputation.

The outstanding impression that his human and artistic personality makes is one of battle, relentless battle against the halfway measures and deceptions of our time, but also, and above all, of battle with himself, an eternal process of sitting in judgment on his own ego, as Ibsen once called it. No, this Jean-Richard Bloch, who since his youth has stood about where Romain Rolland, Georges Duhamel, Jules Romains, and many other French writers now stand, has never spared himself. He has never withdrawn from the struggle. '*Au-dessus de la mêlée*'—these words have never applied to him. He is a friend of the world in the Walt Whitman, Franz Werfel sense. And in spite of his detestation of war he served for years on the front to show that he was willing to do his full duty. He preserved through the horrors of the battle of Montdidier the manuscript of his first important book, & Co., that 'novel of the world of industry' which describes an Alsatian-Jewish family and its house of business as Balzac might have described them. Jean-Richard Bloch has never dodged any issue. Brought up at the time of the Dreyfus case, which divided France into two camps during the 'nineties, he, like André Spire and Edmond Fleg, has succeeded as few French-Jewish writers have done in

acknowledging without qualification the race to which he belongs. He has always described and praised patience, racial loyalty, and faith in work conscientiously performed as Judaism's invincible sources of strength.

He is no flash in the pan and, unlike many others, has not won success easily. Step by step, in his narrative works, in his essays, and in his plays he has advanced to the honorable position he now occupies. Every line he has ever written bears the marks of incessant labor. A very lofty, very pure, and very practical conception of art lies at the foundation of everything he has done. But he also has an insatiable intellectual curiosity, a burning desire to illuminate all the changes that have occurred with the passage of time in order to understand them. In short, he possesses such a high degree of intellectual intensity that hardly any other young French writer of the present time can compare with him. Stefan Zweig, who recently ranked him with Paul Valéry and André Gide as one of the most significant French writers of our time, has said this about him:—

‘Everything that exists has for him already gone through the process of becoming, and is now living itself out. All his curiosity is devoted primarily to this process of change. His method of observation is dynamic. Mere understanding does not satisfy him. He wants to understand in order to understand the world. He wants to make himself more alert and wise by clear representation in order that he may put his own awakened ego into operation as a living force against and in this period. Just as Valéry and Gide are devoted chiefly to observation and experience, to seeing clearly and seeing accurately, so Jean-Richard Bloch is obsessed with the passion of life itself, with creating a new dynamics of the emotions and a new faith.’

In Belleville, a northeastern section of Paris, lives a proletarian population which the average visitor to Paris rarely sees and which is showing signs of discontent reminiscent of the Commune days of sixty years ago. Trouble ahead is the prospect for France.

## The Other PARIS

By EUGÈNE DABIT

Translated from the *Nouvelle Revue Française*  
Paris Literary Monthly

IN BELLEVILLE you find few clerks or officials, for such people, aping their bosses, live west of Paris whenever they can. In the Carrières d'Amérique quarter petty bourgeois dwell in villas. But elsewhere there vegetates a population that votes red. No preaching about 'social training,' no official promises will turn them from their true destiny.

They set forth every morning to earn their bread. They do not know the joy of departing on long vacations to distant provinces, much less to foreign lands. They are born, live, and die here. They work and love on their native soil. A few came from villages. Some Bretons live in the southwest suburbs, and in the central districts provincials have formed friendly asso-

ciations. But the people of Belleville have purely Parisian roots. Their memories go back to the time of the Commune and they are worker-comrades. Of course, since 1918 foreigners who are not country people at all have established themselves,—Jews, Poles, Algerians,—and these elements have given this suburb its sinister character.

A curse lies heavy on the northeastern suburbs of Paris, whose names are pronounced with fear. The legend of revolution envelops them. The color of poverty does not please those who ride in automobiles on the Champs-Élysées. If one has lived in Belleville one does not become intoxicated with symbols, ideas, and art. One understands that these unfor-

tunates know nothing about any such mirages.

Awaiting the desperate hour when they will be forced to move elsewhere as if they were invaders or barbarians, they have built a world of their own in which they have their own pleasure, love, and property. The first *bistrot* you enter helps to accustom you to this dog's life. Strangers salute you like a brother, you breathe a good smell of tobacco, beer, and *apéritifs*. The *crème de menthe* is the color of country fields, the absinth is the color of dreams, and men who are lighter than dreams are imagining how they will some day leave this place and make a fortune.

Young fellows arrive who are escaping from their family, their boss, or their mistress, and by being together they create a better society for themselves. They sink onto the moleskin-covered bench or into one of the chairs that are studded with gilt nails. They rest their arms on greasy, marble-topped tables, grasp their glass with one hand, and look at the gleaming bottles and the walls, which are lined with glasses, while on the street people hurry by and wagons pass. Usages and laws, good and evil do not count any more. Man's ancient need for miracles unfolds. The hour for supper, the hour for sleep may strike, but they have left the world, left it, that is, until the fatal moment when the proprietor terminates their dreams by announcing closing time. Then they are ejected into the night, growling to themselves. Another day, another hard day before they can taste the same happiness again. They quickly revert to their sheeplike thoughts and each man falls back into his niche and into his job.

## II

Like the *bistrot*, like sleep and love, the cinema is also part of our existence. The rue de Belleville is lined with moving-picture houses, all of which are crowded with fervent audiences. The entertainment of our fathers, on the other hand, consisted only of bars and theatres.

At the movies you are lost in darkness, you dream as you did in your childhood. How passionately you look at those luminous images. You endow them with your own eyes, your own heart, and your own liberty. Finally you become what fate never let you be—a lover, a conqueror, a criminal. Every desire comes to the surface in collective intoxication. There are murmurings, the noise of kisses. The lively or languid notes of an orchestra mount into the perfume-loaded air.

Again we are awakened from our dreams. The news reel arouses us from slumber. It is impossible to gloss over the cruelty of a real face, of a real war scene, or a real act of oppression. What desire to be intimidated, informed, subjected to propaganda, or to derive profit makes us look at such pictures? At Belleville the news reels are badly received. The audience hisses when financiers, priests, ministers, and generals appear. When there are pictures of marching men wearing that grimace of war which characterizes great manœuvres the same cry goes up that we uttered in 1917. Faces grow hard. How many of us are disinterring our memories of the War? Down with such scenes! The images have now disappeared from the screen but we are still upset, having been admitted to the secrets of the world. It is impossible to go on dreaming any

longer. We must unite in the face of suffering and death.

But everybody does not sink into despair. Scenes of disorder make no difference to the pairs of lovers, with their lips pressed together and one breast in the man's hand. Joy is there.

The nineteenth quarter of Paris has many cinemas but only one theatre, which was opened in 1828 and stands at the end of an ill-paved courtyard. The outside is elegant and severe, the programme explains. Inside there are dusty corridors, shabby stairways, and a provincial auditorium. Faded notices announce: 'Immense Success.' The audience in the galleries and in the five-franc seats reminds me of my aunt Tollard and her contemporaries. The greenish light makes the people's faces still more strange. The curtain rises. Everything is false, noble, and dramatic. Cries resound. The gestures become petrified. Old folks wedged into their seats listen to the actors rant. Two ragged working girls are asleep. Time was when passion dwelt here and people thought that they were witnessing real dramas. During the intermission I wander through the lobby. A filthy woman is serving beer from behind a shabby bar, while children dart among the crowd. The odor of tobacco and musk floats through the air. I remember famous names—Mélingue, Brasseur, Virginie Goy. Phantoms all. After them other creatures of flesh and blood imitated their lives and exploited their tradition without enriching it. But to what purpose? The present flows through the rue de Belleville.

Time to go home. After work and after pleasure, a home awaits you. Everybody does not live in a stuffy flat. We care more than our grand-

fathers did about breathing, washing ourselves, and not being devoured by vermin. Houses they gaped at with admiration do not satisfy us any more. Such houses have grown old. There is gas on every floor and water at the head of the stairs, but few have modern plumbing. What excitement on certain evenings when a water pump and carts appear in front of the door. But that does n't happen every week. Meanwhile every day one breathes kitchen smells, one hears one's neighbors arguing and playing their phonographs and radios. In the evening the funereal light from a gas jet or a cheap kerosene lamp illuminates the brown walls of the stairway with a color that does not look clean.

But even so it would not be so bad if you had a view. The lucky ones look out over an expanse of chimneys and roofs, but they have to climb six stories, and, when the lady of the establishment sends them to the cellar to fill a coal scuttle or asks them to take down the swill, what a job it is. In summer from the lower stories you can see a speck of blue sky out your window by twisting your head and across the way interiors that resemble your own too much to make you want to look at them. On Sunday a ray of sunshine smiles upon you, but during the week you have n't got time to wait for its visit. And in winter who needs a view or light? You get up while it is still dark and get back after nightfall. Darkness hides the filthy walls, the chimneys, and the laundry hung out to dry.

### III

Returning from military service, you wanted to 'make a home.' You got married and installed yourself in one.

You could not set yourself up in a new place but replaced some poor good-for-nothings in lodgings that your parents gave you. The past weighed you down. You did n't spend any money on decorations. To indulge your taste and realize your ideal you would have had to summon painters or else spend a Sunday with a jar of paste sticking up wall paper representing fields of flowers and costing five francs a roll, and everybody has n't got the means to let his fancy roam in this way. Then you placed your bed and bureau where you saw the marks that had been left before. Different households succeed each other like couples in a hotel, without knowing each other.

Nothing is lost, they say. Hence you must believe that the dreams, sorrows, and anguish of your predecessors are glued to the walls and lurk in the cracks of the floor. This kind of vermin, which is more dangerous than fleas, devours your soul. You nail up calendars, chromolithographs, and a portrait of your wedding. You buy artificial flowers, a bureau with columns on it, candlesticks ornamented with pearls. You frequent movies and bars. Nothing will lift you from the rut that your unknown brothers have made. God knows when you will get away. Ten years have gone by, passing like a season.

On the floor above sombre men turn their eyes to new gods. They have nailed to the wall a photograph of Jaurès or Lenin under which they pray during evenings of distress. If they go out it is to attend a meeting on the rue Mathurin-Moreau. Often they even go as far as the Maison des Syndicats on the rue de la Grange-aux-Belles, and on the first of May they

try to parade on the grand boulevards. The comrades occupy a sixth of the world's surface and their reign will be established here in time.

Hovels are torn down, new streets are built, but who lives in the new apartments? People only have enough money to eat, dress themselves, and live in poor quarters. Happiness has not yet been born from so much submission, suffering, and privation.

You old men understand, you waifs and strays, you living proofs of our failures. You are unknown heroes, martyrs to a dead faith, martyrs to a poverty that has not changed. Old men with faces lined like sidewalks, marked like the streets, old men with fumbling hands, those of you who do not beg have little businesses of your own. On the place des Fêtes a shoe-lace vendor with a lined face seems to be wearing a mask with a false beard and artificially colored lips. In the market on the rue du Telegraph an old woman selling thyme repeats in a quavering voice, 'Help the blind.' Others go from one lumber yard to another, picking up wood. Others are porters or night watchmen. On their day out the inmates of old men's homes, in their coarse blue uniforms, hold out their hands, fearfully begging for enough money to buy a package of good tobacco.

#### IV

Every evening on the platform of the gare de l'Est I see a pale, old, wrinkled woman bowed down with the weight of her pile of newspapers, her hands blackened with printer's ink. She walks a little way, coughs, sits down, and breathes hard. By one o'clock in the morning she has not sold all her merchandise. She takes the last

subway and gets out at the place des Fêtes, from which she makes her way painfully to her lodgings on the rue du Jourdain.

A cripple stands on the corner of the rue Lemière and the rue des Bois, leaning against a wall. He is selling thumb-marked pamphlets and tattered books that are spread out on the sidewalk. After he has taken in a few sous he goes away, walking softly because of his frozen feet, his right arm supported by a piece of string, and his pack on his back. He returns to his hovel on the Pré-Saint-Gervais, where he finds a tubercular son, ministers to him and for hours dreams about the Belleville of his youth. In those days he frequented the Biribi, a dive where the waiter wore wooden shoes. He was often sought for there to act as a super in the Belleville theatre. Now he is

often accompanied by a knock-kneed man with a face as wrinkled as an old apple, father Bertrand, a gardener who is also trying to find his old quarter where lilacs used to flourish and where people used to collect currants and pears in baskets. They will all go to the cemetery soon and perhaps I shall be the only one to guard their memory.

A new generation is displacing them, a generation of workers and their sons who band together with clenched fists, eager to emerge from slavery. There are violent and weak men here, worried men and confident ones. The factory holds them; poverty pursues them into the very hovels where they live. But they hear appeals rising from the whole world. The leaden sky that weighs them down is streaked with rays of light.

Fresh from the Arabian Desert, Mohammed Asad visits the hill country of northern India, which he finds more to his taste than the effete Indian plain.

# Himalayan HOLIDAY

By MOHAMMED ASAD

Translated from the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*  
Zürich German-Language Daily

I STOOD sadly in the old bazaar of Lahore and wondered why it was that Indians, in their everyday life, seemed like empty, meaningless husks driven by the wind. I was standing in that narrow street which runs from the Delhi gate to the centre of the old city. I saw two rows of tiny shops only three feet high, mere niches, in which merchants were squatting among their wares, as they do in so many other Eastern cities. I watched a thick stream of people going steadily by in both directions, pushing and jostling each other and crying out. There were porters, ox carts, two-wheeled tongas, a changing mass of clothes and faces and colors, of men and women. But, hard as I tried, I could not make them assume a definite form as a whole. They were like a lot of bright colors that have been mixed together till they form an empty, lifeless gray.

Through the arch of a gateway that

spanned the bazaar I could see portions of the old mosque, a mighty monument built three hundred years ago by a prosperous minister who had been richly rewarded by his sovereign. A wonderful blending and harmony of colors, glazed tiles fitting together to form a mosaic, a whole great wall of colored tiles designed in perfect rhythm—how remote that all is from the India of to-day. Perhaps the people themselves felt this painful contradiction and wished to conceal it, for they have built a row of shops diagonally in front of the mosque. Sweets and sour milk and cream are sold, public cooks work for little money—and Wazir Khan's mosque dares to reveal only a fraction of its splendor to the passer-by. For though it belongs to the past it is a living reality.

But the life of present-day India is like a moon that reflects the sunlight

of our imagination and memory yet sheds no light of its own. It has no character if, apart from moral considerations, we mean by character a certain sum of definite, clearly outlined characteristics. Or is, perhaps, the India of to-day an amorphous cosmos, big with future fulfillment because it is so wretched and so infinitely large?

## II

As it was beginning to grow dusk an Indian friend came along and seized my hand. 'I know a singer,' he said, 'whom I want you to hear this very evening.' I went with him. Whenever I am oppressed by India's vagueness and remoteness from life, I shall always think of that wonderful woman; for what I saw was vitality incarnate.

We found her in a carpeted room among musicians with cymbals, noisy drums, and marvelously shaped guitars. She sang, and her voice was deep and of good tone, but that was incidental. She was wearing the most beautiful kind of Indian feminine attire: wide trousers of blue brocade embroidered with gold, a lilac-colored tunic with flowing sleeves, and over her head and shoulders a true Benares veil delicately woven of red and gold threads. But even that was unimportant compared to the tranquil, unconventional reality of her bearing and gestures.

She was not what one would usually call pretty, for she had prominent cheek bones and a somewhat too wide nose. But her eyes had that rare, perfect almond shape which is seen only in the mountainous regions of Asia. And, as a matter of fact, she belonged to the Perni race, one of

those nomadic peoples of enigmatic origin that roam the plateaus of northernmost India. Her brow was low but broad and well-formed, and her mouth was red and quivering, filled with deep knowledge and even greater hope, as if it were forever thinking of all the intoxication, all the bitterness, and all the sensual pleasure of past and future days. It was not intellectual knowledge or memory, not thought, but *being*, a continuous living in the present. But the strangest thing about her was doubtless her hands, long, narrow, aristocratic hands full of soft strength and with secret, panicky motions, hands that never became enervated, even in sleep, and that never lost their inner radiance. And as I look back I could almost swear that a real light radiated, with infinite tenderness, from the white skin of her fingers.

A curious Platonic friendship arose between this lady and myself. For my part, I felt astonishment at anything so perfect; and as for her, though it sounds almost ludicrous to say so, she was impressed by the fact that I was a hadji—one who has made a pilgrimage to Mecca—and that, moreover, I lived in Medina, near the Prophet's grave. For although women singers in India are more than broad-minded in regard to their moral standards, those of them who are Mohammedan feel an unusually strong interest in everything pertaining to religion. They begin the day by reciting a portion of the Koran; they fast during the month of Ramadan—and at the same time they view the lack of harmony between their life and their faith with a kind of melancholy resignation. But it may perhaps be said that although they are often dissipated they

are never depraved—and only hardened Pharisees will deny that such a distinction exists or that, although they live as dancing girls, they have retained a feminine attitude.

She sang and also danced a little, though it was not really dancing but merely walking around and moving her arms and feet. Her silver anklets jingled, and she stared into space out of the depths of her great, black almond eyes. Then she sank wearily into some cushions against the wall, and her shell-colored hands lay to either side of her on the dark carpet. My friend asked her where she had been born, and she answered: 'My father was a musician. We went from city to city, wherever there was an annual fair. My mother bore me at the fair in Kulu, while the Hindus were holding their Dusserah festival. Then she died, because it was so cold there. My father told me later that they buried her while the Hindus were dancing around their gods and drinking rice liquor on the meadow near by, and Father wept bitterly because there was no one to read aloud from the Koran over his dead wife.'

I asked where Kulu was, but she did not know exactly; it was somewhere in the mountains beyond Kangra.

### III

Thus it happened that the name 'Kulu' swam into my ken, and I heard the fifes and drums and the singing of men dancing about gold and silver idols in a cold mountain valley with meadows and fir trees and clear, biting air. I began to long for Kulu. That same evening I opened a map when I got home, and there I found it—a town and district in the

Himalayas on the edge of the Punjab, not far from the Tibetan border. Thither we should go. And the Dusserah festival was only a few days off.

We changed trains by night at Pathankot and left the plains of the Punjab for good and all. A narrow-gauge line took us through the valley of Kangra at the break of dawn, and we got our first foretaste of the Himalayas: crests of hills rising dark against the reddening sky, cool and green with their woods, sloping fields, and tea plantations; here and there a mountain brook, rushing over water-worn stones. In the forenoon we entered rocky country and the railroad had to make many turns. And then the little town of Kangra, from which the valley takes its name, came into view. Widely scattered houses buried in foliage up to their slate-covered roofs and above, on the top of a solitary hill, the ruins of the old fort of Nagarkot. Many hundred years ago it was considered impregnable and in troublous times it offered the princes of northern India a place of certain refuge. Great quantities of idols ornamented with the most costly jewels also stood here. But the time came when Mahmud of Ghazni, one of the great figures of the Mohammedan Middle Ages, arrived here to destroy all idols in honor of the only God and to break the power of those who worshiped them. He took the fort at the first attack. It is told that on their return home from this expedition his soldiers sold by the bushel in the market place of Ghazni the jewels they had seized. The slaves who had been brought back from the plains and hills of India brought scarcely eight silver pieces a head.

The railroad did not continue much further and the mountains were already growing pretty high. I got out at the village of Joginder Nagar. There was a narrow bazaar street with shops on both sides and the houses had wooden verandas and balconies and gabled roofs, like Swiss chalets. The odor in the street was like that of mountain villages all over the world—an odor of fresh wood and cow stables, of milk and untanned leather, and the cool fragrance of trees. There were two ways to get to Kulu—one, a footpath over the Bhabu Pass that would take three days; the other, a roundabout route through Mandi, one day by mail truck.

Mandi is the capital of the semi-independent native state of the same name on the western edge of the Himalayas, a lovely little spot of mountains and foaming streams, narrow streets going up and down hill between rows of houses from which pretty women in voluminous colored skirts issue forth. There are also small, very old temples with high, steep domes and tiny half-open courtyards in which one can see a strangely formed god or a bronze cow, the face always turned inward toward the holy shrine.

This place reminds one of the happy homecoming in a fairy tale, for it radiates peace and security and does not give out a single false tone. The houses are simple and unpretentious, indeed, almost tasteless, and the streets wind in and out, accommodating themselves to the hills between which the town is suspended. But that is precisely what is impressive about Mandi, for not one of its architectural structures claims to be

anything in itself but simply adjusts itself to the requirements of the countryside, that is, to reality. If the long quadrangular market place above stretches out in a barely perceptible slope, that is solely because only here and only to this extent was there a level space on the top of a hill. And the shops, surmounted by a row of little wooden turrets, which surround the market place on three sides are like the rim of a basin that protects and holds in its contents. Behind them on three sides the hill declines, falling down like a green tablecloth with many folds. The folds are narrow, shaded, winding streets that run downhill to the Beas River on the north, and the embroidery on the hem of the tablecloth consists of countless old stone temples, carved into bizarre forms and crowned with conical or oval domes. They stand on the edge of the river, which is considered holy, and from their dim depths the statues of gods watch the eternal water rushing by. There is Ganesa, with the elephant's head, and ten-armed Durga, and many others whose names are unknown to the foreigner.

When I saw Mandi for the first time at twilight yesterday, now concealed and now revealed by the many windings of our road, when I saw its houses climbing upward from the edge of the river among bushes and trees, while here and there lights sparkled from their windows, I forgot my grudge against the India of the plains, against its vagueness and remoteness from life. Mandi seemed like a justification, like one of those few righteous beings for whose sake God, as ancient scriptures tell, was ready to pardon an entire guilty people.

## IV

The morning we left Mandi was clear as glass. No shadow lay on the clean expanse of thickly wooded mountains. The world had drunk its fill of the silence of the night and day was now speaking with all its cheerful clamor. A little bell was tinkling in a Hindu temple on the bank of the Beas River. Women were singing in the rice fields that sloped downward in terraces toward the water.

The Himalayas began with dense mountains and deep valleys. The mountains were covered with trees and their slopes were softly rounded. Streams purled through the valleys. After the Indian plain, after the cheerless, endless landscape that lacks the freedom of the Asiatic steppes as well as the majesty of the desert and merely yields daily bread in return for hard labor, after this Indian plain it was really a revelation to climb the rising Himalayas. For hours our automobile continued high above the river, winding upwards through the mountains as the landscape became steadily more wild, more lofty, and more still. The rice fields disappeared. The gently rounded mountains were often transformed into precipitous walls that held the foaming river in their grip, and the road ahead of us kept growing narrower and more tortuous. We had reached the pass between Mandi and the valley of Kulu.

Then the landscape gradually flattened. The mountains lost their unassailable steepness and descended on both sides of the river. They became rounded again, and again their rocky nakedness became covered with turf and trees. The valley opened out into

an extensive plateau with meadows and lovely forests, and then for the first time in many years I saw fir trees, dark green, towering fir trees full of mysteries and memories. And the years that I had spent in the desert and in torrid solitude grew dim and vanished while other years rose up and called to me with long-forgotten voices. And I recognized in the sudden momentary contraction of my heart that my life had hung between two worlds without a home in either. But when I recovered my senses I understood that my sensations were due entirely to this strange country of India, which is so curious that it is almost unreal, a world between worlds without a home in either, a country that is neither East nor West.

The first village in the Kulu valley lay before us. Houses with sharply sloping slate roofs were sunk between tea plantations. Wild-eyed shepherds were driving a great herd of sheep. They had come from the mountains bordering on Tibet and were moving toward the plain in order to escape the Himalayan winter. While our chauffeur stopped for water and gasoline I walked over to a group of shepherds who were eating their midday meal by the roadside. I spoke to them in my broken Hindustani, but they did not understand me. Their home was far from here in Ladakh. They wore short, shirtlike jackets made of coarse, light-gray wool and had sandals strapped to their feet. Their long hair was disheveled and their faces looked as if they had been cast in dark metal. One of them offered me a wooden bowl of milk. I drank it and saw over the rim the dark eyes of a boy regarding me.

These eyes had that placid apathy which those of newborn animals often have. They were warm and amazingly round. Never had I seen such eyes in the Indian lowlands, where the children have keen perceptions and seem to be born old.

And there was Kulu. At first I could see only a wide meadow where many people were busy setting up little shops and tents and carrying beams and planks here and there. The keeper of an eating house was building an earthen oven. Merchants from Chinese Turkestan were unpacking great bundles of carpets. But behind the confusion on the festive plain rose a wall of silence in the form of thousands of Himalayan fir trees that rose to an inconceivable height against a background of mountain and sky. They were as wonderful and as even in their growth as the colonnades of some old temple.

A few houses stood near the field where the preparations for the festival were under way—a post office, a school, an inn for travelers, and a few other public buildings. But the real Kulu was invisible. I first discovered it in the late afternoon as I was wandering among the shops of the so-called lower bazaar. I saw a narrow street that suddenly ran up a steep hill and then disappeared in a series of curves. Here Kulu began. In ancient times they had built the little town over the crest of a hill and had walled it in. Now the walls have disappeared and Kulu hangs like a pair of saddlebags on both sides of the eminence. The only road climbs one side and descends the other, running like a ravine between little old houses with wooden façades that have shops downstairs and upstairs carved,

smoke-stained verandas. There is a great stillness in this street, which is so narrow that two people in opposite windows could shake hands with each other. Life has been confined to a miniature framework by reason of the almost other-worldly remoteness and self-sufficiency of this little town. All the people keep silent. The shopkeepers sit motionless and cross-legged in their shops, where the products of European factories are offered for sale side by side with dusty curios from upper Asia.

The people here have waxen faces. They are quite different from the noisy, laughing peasant girls and young fellows in the new lower bazaar or the people in the meadow. They lead a secluded life like figures in some abandoned marionette show. Many of the men wear the yellow mark of the Brahman on their faces, the mark of the highest caste of the thrice-born, and the women here have a quiet, aristocratic bearing. They do not talk loudly or laugh and their faces are of a dull whiteness and possess a remarkably appealing and at the same time piquant beauty, bordering on coldness yet at the same time revealing the smouldering fire lurking in their hearts. I caught a low, wordless whispering in the air every time these women passed. They wore colored shawls and silk kerchiefs and almost always walked in groups. Their eyes looked straight ahead.

Is the atmosphere of Kulu a charm or a curse? I cannot definitely say, for the change from the fir trees in the valley and the unconstrained hilarity of the peasants to this forgotten, remote mountain village was too sharp, too unreal, for my sensations to be translated into words.

A dim, vaulted gateway brought me into an open, grassy square surrounded by some buildings that were taller and better constructed than the others I had seen. They were the palace of the Rajah of Kulu, to-day rajah in name only and no longer enjoying even the appearance of power. His ancestors ruled over Kulu, Lahul, and Spiti, and a large part of the principality of Chamba in the northwest. They kept in constant communication with the Dalai Lama of Tibet, and even the government of the Celestial Empire considered itself obliged to accept occasional presents from the ruler of Kulu and to give presents in return, since the chief trade routes from Tibet and Chinese Turkestan to India meet at Kulu. In the middle of the last century the British conquered Kulu and added it to the Indian Empire, and the man who is now allowed to call himself the Rajah of Kulu hardly differs from many of the other great landed proprietors of India. Nevertheless, the people of Kulu still pay him the same honors that their ancestors paid to his ancestor. Hence the Rajah must have a palace, even though it costs more to maintain than all the other local expenditures put together.

From the high plateau in front of the palace I surveyed the houses of Kulu, which stood in irregular groups on both sides of the mountain. Unlike the villages and towns of the plains, they gave a very strong impression of cleanliness. Every house was surrounded by a little paved courtyard. Thousands and thousands of yellow ears of corn were laid out to dry on the slate roofs. Poppies were growing in

front of the windows, and big rose-bushes were in bloom.

As evening approached I decided that I had better start making my way back, for I had taken a room at the inn. I saw another narrow gateway leading from the palace square toward the cluster of houses around the bazaar and took this route. However, it turned out not to be a path at all but a little walled court with a door at the rear, and over the door curious figures of idols cut in stone—women with many arms, gods with the heads of elephants, obscene embraces between the sexes. Obviously it was a temple. The door was ajar. I looked in through the dim light. Nobody was there and I could not resist the temptation to enter, although non-Hindus are strictly forbidden to enter Hindu temples. What light there was came in through the half-open door and through a long, narrow window that extended up to the roof. Outside the sun was setting.

I had difficulty in distinguishing the details. The room was small and the low roof was made of blackened, carved deodar logs. A few silver and copper lamps hung from the ceiling on chains, but they were not lit. At the further end of the room stood a kind of altar. It was a single block of wood in the shape of a pyramid, all four sides of which were decorated with the silver masks of gods. In front of it was a shallow stone vessel half full of oil, out of the middle of which rose a perpendicular, polished stone about a foot long. It was apparently made of black marble and was about as thick as a child's arm. This was the *linga*, the phallic symbol of Hindu mythology, the sign of fertility and rebirth.

I was surprised to find a linga temple here in the Himalayas and wanted to open the door wider in order to look at the room more closely; but I suddenly heard voices outside. It would have been more than embarrassing for me to be found here in the temple, me, an unbeliever, an unclean person whose mere presence in the house of the gods would defile it for many days. Therefore I quickly drew back inside the temple and squeezed myself into a narrow alcove on the right, behind the pyramid. A big barrel of oil, which I supposed was the holy oil for the temple lamp, protected me from sight if I made myself small enough.

An old man entered. I saw his face as he lit the lamps. He had the Brahman sign on his forehead and was obviously a priest of this temple, though his clothes did not differ in the smallest detail from the usual Kulu garments. After he had lit the lights he opened the door a little wider and a young woman appeared. She held her head low and listened to the words of the priest, who spoke to her in a half whisper, urgently, as if in warning.

What on earth was going to happen to me, I wondered. I looked sharply about and discovered to my relief a small door in the back of the alcove. It was held shut on the inside by a wooden bolt and led, as I could see through the cracks, to the open stretch of grass in front of the palace. At that moment nobody was out there. The way for my exit was clear. I had pulled the bolt slowly when I heard the other door creak on its hinges. I looked sharply over the edge of the barrel and saw the young woman alone in the room in front of

the linga. The priest had gone and shut the door behind him.

I waited. In the flickering light of the oil lamp I saw the woman's face. It was sad and anxious. She stood for a while with folded hands in front of the linga and then slowly began undoing the buckles on her clothes. She threw off the shawl that hid her face and then with slow, dawdling motions took off all the rest of her clothes until she stood naked and shivering in the temple. Then she knelt down before the linga, and I understood. She was barren and was praying to the god of her belief for a child. She dipped the ends of her fingers in the holy oil of the stone basin, rubbed it over the linga and then on her own forehead, breasts, and hips. When she had done this she threw herself face downwards and beat her forehead repeatedly on the stone floor. And as she lay there a slight shudder passed over her shoulders and I heard a suppressed sound of weeping. Such weeping I had never heard in my life before. It was so full of despair, helplessness, and misery that my blood ran cold. For the greatest misfortune that can befall a Hindu woman is not to have a child that can perform the holy rites after her death and thus make rebirth possible.

I could not bear this weeping any longer. Gently I opened the little door and slipped out, and at the same moment the woman in the temple let out a sob of heartrending despair. Panic seized my heart. I ran with tremendous strides, as if I were being pursued, across the grassy surface of the empty square, on which the harvest moon was casting its first pale light.

The Oxford Union Society voted at a recent debate against fighting 'for King and Country.' Here is a London editorial on the subject and a report from the Union's undergraduate president. The episode indicates that England's oldest university has gone pacifist.

# Oxford Goes LEFT

## A TALE OF HORROR

### I. 'YELLOW COWARDS'

From the *Week-end Review*, London Independent Weekly of the Right

WE CULL the flower of language that adorns the head of this article from the elegant garlands of abuse that have decked the columns of the press in honor of the undergraduates of Oxford University, who the other evening carried a motion in the Union by 275 votes to 153 to the effect 'that this House will in no circumstances fight for its King and Country.' To gather a representative selection would make a pretty if somewhat cumbersome nosegay. Seldom can the language of the gutter have been more freely applied by defenders of the established order to that order's gilded youth. Instead of pausing to consider the precise meaning of the vote, one paper after another rushed

into print with expletives. It did n't really happen. Or, alternatively, if it did happen, it was n't fair. The voting was n't representative; the undergraduates did n't mean what they said. Or, alternatively, if they did mean what they said they were cads. Nothing was too bad for them; even the Honorable Quintin Hogg was hauled into service for the attack.

*The Times* was at its characteristic best. The Union 'is in no sense representative of the University (despite [ominous thought for the future!] the eminent persons in every generation who have used it as a training ground for Parliament)'; it has 'always been liable to fall into the hands of a little clique of cranks.' We wish we had the

patience to search the files of *The Times* for an occasion when the Union had passed a motion that happened to accord with that newspaper's outlook (even this must have happened some time); but we can imagine how it would go. 'Rarely has the voice of Oxford spoken so surely for the youth of the nation . . .' On this point we have the view of the president of the Union himself, in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian*. The Union, he says, 'is not representative of the whole of Oxford undergraduate opinion, though it is probably more representative of it than any other single body'; and it does 'quite fairly represent the views of those undergraduates who are interested in politics.' He adds that the total poll on this occasion was abnormally large, the number of votes recorded being 428, as against 303, 207, and 276 in the three previous debates this term.

For our part we believe that the vote was reasonably representative of thoughtful undergraduate opinion, that the motion meant what it said, and that those who voted for it understood its meaning; and we regard the facts as of considerable significance. No doubt the motion was extremely phrased; that is the way of undergraduates, and in a matter of this kind extremes are unavoidable: you cannot compromise with war. 'If it had been expressed in more abstract terms,' commented one paper, 'it would not have excited quite the same disapproval.'

That is the way with these newspapers; they like their pacifism to be abstract and their militarism concrete. This week, while they have been paying lip service to the efforts of the

Disarmament Conference, their columns have been strident with American naval scares and plans for a big new building drive by the British Admiralty. So no wonder they do not like it when young men who mean what they say have the indecency to say what they mean.

This vote suggests that the tide is running against them. Even the soldiers are no longer solidly on their side. Sir Ian Hamilton has warned them what failure at Geneva will mean, and now come the dramatic last instructions of the late Field Marshal Sir William Robertson, who laid it down that there is to be no gun carriage at his funeral; that there are to be no uniforms; that representatives of the regiments with which he was associated must attend, if at all, in mufti. The French military mission that was coming over in his honor has had to be canceled, and War Office circles are scandalized.

The Union vote is another straw. Mr. Baldwin told the young men the other day that it was up to them to make a stand, and now he has got what he asked for. These young men have thought for themselves enough to question the values that brought their fathers and uncles to torture and death. They have not, as they are being glibly told, forgotten the example of 1914-1918. They have not forgotten, they have remembered; and, remembering, they want to ensure that the sacrifices of those years shall not have been made for nothing.

Are they going to be allowed to do it? Largely, it depends on them. They have registered a vote, but that is not enough; in order to justify it they must work to make it effective. Peace

as a permanent reality depends on the organization of an active and overwhelming weight of opinion against war. Oxford must go on to prove that she is not the home of lost causes.

## II. POLITICAL TENDENCIES AT OXFORD

By F. M. HARDIE

From the *New Statesman and Nation*, London Independent Weekly of the Left

**I**N THE last year or two the swing to the left among students of politics at Oxford has been very striking. My sources of information about Conservatism and Liberalism are few, but at the moment it seems roughly true to say that the Conservatives are almost to a man Liberals but for the name; that the Liberals are all followers of Sir Herbert Samuel and Mr. Lloyd George; that more of them follow the latter than the former; that Sir John Simon has no following at all, and that the Socialists are extreme Socialists, prepared to go even further than the resolutions of the Leicester Conference would have them go, and increasingly interested in the gospel according to Marx. Finally there are the Communists, whose mere existence in an organized form at Oxford is a sign of the times that should not be ignored.

In October 1931 the Oxford University Labor Club did not hesitate to ask Mr. MacDonald to resign his position as president of the Club, and appointed Mr. G. D. H. Cole in his place. There was some opposition to this step in the club at the time, and the foundation of a rival body to represent a National Labor point of view was confidently expected. No such club has been founded, and while Mr. Lloyd George seems to have a great hold on the minds of many

undergraduates Mr. MacDonald appears to be without any influence at all.

The Labor Club now has a membership of nearly five hundred, and that it holds a well-attended meeting every week is, in view of the innumerable calls on the time of an Oxford undergraduate, a very creditable achievement. The club sent a delegation to the demonstration in Hyde Park last Sunday, a delegation whose appearance was greeted with great enthusiasm by other demonstrators.

The Thursday Club, a discussion club for Labor dons, has a membership of between thirty and forty, mostly men under the age of thirty, most of them definite Socialists; it is said (though here I am open to correction) that no Oxford economist can be found to support the National Government. The project of the foundation in emulation of Cambridge of a University Labor Party is at the moment being actively canvassed.

The October Club, a definitely Communist organization, held its first meeting in January 1932. When it was founded it was in most Oxford circles regarded as a joke and not a particularly good joke, and it was confidently prophesied that when its founder went down the club would collapse.

Actually it now has a mem-

bership of between two and three hundred, though, of course, it is true that many of these members (it is impossible to say what exact proportion) have joined because they are interested in Soviet Russia and in Communism rather than because they are themselves uncompromising Marxists. The October Club, contrary to expectation, has come to stay; and most of the Octobrists are very far from being neurotic cranks, but are perfectly serious and intelligent students of political questions.

There are signs of the growth of a 'united front' between the Labor Club and the October Club, and both clubs coöperated to give very practical help to the hunger marchers when they passed through Oxford last October.

## II

This swing to the left has recently been seen in operation at the Union. Young men are not normally die-hards, and the Union is not normally Conservative. Nor is it normally Socialist. At an average debate the majority of members present could best be described as 'radicals'; the backwoodsmen who only come when some distinguished visitor has been billed tend to swell the Tory ranks. Much depends on the accidents of personality. If, for example, a particularly brilliant Tory speaker is in residence, he will build up a considerable body of support for his point of view.

Furthermore, it is worth noticing that since the financial crisis of 1931 brought home to us the realization of a more permanent and deep-rooted crisis in the whole social and economic order, the tradition of the Oxford

Union epigram, of which Mr. Philip Guedalla, president in 1911, was the greatest and most brilliant exponent, has been rapidly on the wane. Speakers are now more serious, witticisms are few and far between, and political feeling is very strong.

In October 1931, in common with the rest of the country, the Union gave its support to the National Government. Disillusionment was very rapid. For a time there was much talk of the possibility of the formation of a new progressive party of the left centre, but last term, after a debate in which Mr. Duff Cooper was followed by Mr. George Lansbury, the House voted by a majority of sixty-seven that: 'In Socialism lies the only solution to the problems facing this country.' No such motion had ever before been carried.

The process of the swing to the left has been continued this term. The British Empire was not held to be a menace to international good will, but any hope of a future for British Liberalism was denied; and at the third debate, when the society for the second time in its history was visited by a team of two speakers from Ruskin College, a motion was carried demanding the abolition of the Means Test and an immediate restoration of the cuts in the rates of unemployment benefit. Finally, on February 9, after a debate of exceptionally high standard before an exceptionally large house, the motion, 'That this House will in no circumstances fight for its King and Country,' was carried by 275 votes to 153.

This decision has produced a great deal of comment, mainly misinformed, in the London press. The question debated was in no way the ques-

tion of the relative advantages of monarchy and republicanism, though that is a fit and proper subject for public discussion. Nor in the debate itself was any slur cast on the memory of those who were killed fighting for their King and Country between 1914 and 1918.

The question before the Union was that of how, since a solemn pledge had been given to those men that they were fighting in a war to end war, that pledge could best be carried into effect. The Union, having been provided with the opportunity, decided quite sincerely and quite seriously that the best method of ending war was that of individual resistance to any future war; and many intelligent people who disagree with that

argument would be bound on reflection to admit that it is an argument for which a great deal can be said. Apart from the party clubs the most flourishing political organization at Oxford is the League of Nations Society. But the feeling that the League bluff has been successfully called by the Japanese is naturally very general.

The present generation of Oxford undergraduates as a whole probably does more hard work and more hard thinking than any previous generation as a whole, and certainly has more access to sources of political information. Is this swing to the left at Oxford to be met with the serious consideration with which it deserves to be met, or is it to be met only with vulgar abuse?

A former member of the History Department at Harvard applies the theories of classical economy to unemployment and urges wage cuts, expropriations, and national dividends for everybody.

# A Diagnosis of Unemployment

By EDWARD MOTLEY PICKMAN

**A**LMOST everyone now agrees that the present inequalities of wealth are neither expedient nor desirable. Confiscation of private property by unequal taxation—a burning issue a generation ago—is now a commonplace. But the problem remains how far such confiscation may wisely proceed. Actually the great fortunes have been, and still are, the national savings accounts, the accumulations of surplus which, in the form of capital profitably invested, make possible a gradual increase in the national income. On the integrity of past savings and the increase in future savings our national income ultimately depends. The Steel Corporation is worth as much to this nation with 120 million holders of a single share each as it is with a single owner of all its shares; but unless the 120 million holders leave their capital

in the company our national capital will be impaired.

It is therefore absolutely vital that the excess wealth of the rich be so confiscated that the national wealth is not thereby reduced. Here there is a triple danger to be avoided: the confiscated money must not reach the maw of the spendthrift state; it must not be sucked dry by artificially high wages; it must not be squandered by individuals. In other words, this capital must remain capital. It has been estimated that between 1929 and 1932 our national wealth fell from 400 to 100 billions, whereas dollar value was up only one-third, or one-ninth of this depreciation. It is true that this 400 billions proved to be an inflated value; at the same time the fact that during these three years our national dollar income fell over one-half warns us that

if capital value be much further dissipated we shall all sink, rich and poor alike, into the bog. Russia's Five-Year Plan was designed to rehabilitate her dissipated capital; yet even now millions of her people are faced with real starvation.

All this ought to be obvious enough. Yet in this present crisis our people have innocently chosen to rely on the judgment of a new school of economists who, like the immortal Socrates, boast of their superiority because, unlike other men, they alone know that they know nothing. With a bland smile they casually dismiss the opinions of business men as biased and of classical economists as false. It is true—we admit it—that the business man and old economist often erred. How surprising! Because our forbears erred must we infer that if only we eliminate them we infallibly eliminate error too? Of all short cuts the one that cuts off the past is the most futile.

Mr. R. G. Tugwell, who is one of President Roosevelt's economic advisers, has said:—

'When it becomes clear that human welfare is jeopardized by the working of any economic law, human intelligence has a way of going to work with entire disregard of threatened consequences and contriving some alternative scheme of operation that will work better for the purpose.' (*The Trend of Economics*, R. G. Tugwell, editor, 1924, p. 392.)

Was Mr. Tugwell thinking of Russia? And I am curious to know if he also had in mind the fall of the Western Roman Empire. In this latter case if we substitute the words 'human stupidity' for 'human intelligence' and the words 'contriving no alternative' for 'contriving some alternative'

we get an admirable historical dictum. Or has the human mind perhaps transformed itself since those days? We are indeed grateful to you, Mr. Tugwell, for your cheerful thought; and yet—I am not wholly easy. May it not rather be because human stupidity 'has a way of going to work with entire disregard of threatened consequences' that we are to-day blighted by the unemployment of ten millions and a dollar production much less than one half that of 1929? Because the automobile has superseded the horse must we infer that Mr. Tugwell has superseded John Stuart Mill and Alfred Marshall?

The old economists did, to be sure, talk rather glibly about the nature of wages, capital, and profits. But the categories seemed convenient then, and they seem so still. Let us imagine a craftsman making benches. You drop in on him at the noon hour; there is a bench he has just made that morning, and he tells you that he intends to make another in the afternoon. The bench already made is capital (the product of past labor); the bench yet to be made is labor. Now you take a fancy to the morning bench and say you want to use it. He says you may if you will pay him for its use. This payment or rent would be his profit. But you, having read and believed what the new or romantic economists have said, don't believe in profits and therefore tell him you have a social right to take the bench away and use it as long as you like without paying him a cent. This would, no doubt, be very delightful and original of you, but if your practice became chronic and general everyone would either have to make his own bench or remain standing.

But to return to the two benches. If the distinction between capital and labor is misleading, why are you so eager to increase the rewards of labor and to decrease those of capital? Why do you righteously insist on paying handsomely for the afternoon bench and stingily for the morning bench? Can it only be because you happened in at noon? If future labor is noble but past labor ignoble, procrastination must be a virtue. But actually, of course, there is no ethical but only a temporal distinction.

## II

In order to illustrate this fundamental truth let us imagine this country as it was when no one could be found willing to pay a cent for it. From motives of religion or adventure men might nevertheless come and settle here. There would, of course, be capital then, on the spot—land to be tilled, fish to be caught, wood to be burned. With hard labor a living could be had, but, according to our standards, a meagre living. With a small capital accumulation and hence small profits the wage paid to the first hired man must have been small, too. Thus a modest capital, however well bolstered with brains, must, at least for a time, pay only a modest wage.

In contrast to this condition it is estimated that in 1932 the capital value of the United States still equaled that of all Europe. Yet our population was a good deal less than half. Can it therefore be merely a coincidence that in that same year American wages had more than twice the purchasing power of the corresponding European wage (Ex-President Hoover's speech of October 15, 1932)? Does not the coinci-

dence corroborate Mills' statement (*Economic Tendencies*, 1932, p. 533, note 1) that 'greater productivity of labor and a higher standard of living may be expected to accompany an increase in the amount of capital equipment employed'? And is this not further corroborated by the table (see *Recent Social Trends*, 1933, p. 230) which lists the 'per cent of national income comprised by wages, salaries, pensions, compensation, etc.,' as against that comprised by 'overhead, maintenance, taxes, and profits'? Whereas 51.9 per cent went into wages, etc., in 1914, the percentage was 59.1 in 1926, 58.8 in 1927, and 58.9 in 1928. Probably an equally reliable calculation—though dealing only with manufacturing (Mills' *Economic Tendencies*, 1932, p. 394)—indicates an 8-per-cent drop in the pay-roll percentage between 1927 and 1929, or from 58.8, let us say, to 54.5 per cent. This manufacturing drop, however, was largely arrested from 1929 to 1931, for whereas labor costs fell 14 per cent, overhead and profits fell 12. (National Bureau of Economic Research, Bulletin No. 45, p. 5—February 20, 1933), thereby reducing the 54.5 only to 53.9 per cent. Now since the manufacturing drop from 58.8 to 54.5 contrasts with the *Recent Social Trends* table, which shows the whole national pay-roll percentage rising from 58.8 in 1927 to 58.9 in 1928, and since the manufacturing drop has been virtually arrested since 1929, we may fairly assume that from 1929 to 1931 the national pay-roll percentage rose rather than fell, probably about 5 per cent. In that case, while the national income fell from 85.2 billions in 1929 to 40 billions in 1932,—or to 47 per cent (National Industrial Conference

Board, Report for February 1933),—the national pay roll only fell to 49.5 per cent. This result is roughly corroborated by Leo Wolman's estimate that 'from 1929 to 1931 the money incomes of employees in the major occupations [including the unemployed] had fallen between 35 and 40 per cent' (*Recent Social Trends*, pp. 822-3); for in those two years the national income fell 38.14 per cent (National Industrial Conference Board Report). If the difference here is negligible it at least tends to show that the national pay roll did not fall faster than the national income—and presumably less fast.

By statistics we learn what has happened; by a concrete case we may learn further why it must have happened. Suppose that our craftsman, on the approach of old age, stops working himself and hires another to make his benches for him. Suppose further that up to 1930 he had been able to sell each of his benches for \$4, and had regularly paid his hired man at the 55 per cent rate of 55 cents an hour. But in 1932 he finds he cannot sell his benches for more than \$2 apiece. If his hired man still insists on being paid at the old rate he must be paid \$2.20 for making a bench that cannot be sold for more than \$2. Obviously, unless the hired man is willing to take a very substantial cut, the craftsman must turn him off. How much can the craftsman now afford to offer him? That must depend on the accuracy of his calculations of profit and risk, but it is unlikely to be more than 60 per cent of the sale price, in other words, a rate of 30 instead of 55 cents an hour. If this offer is refused and the craftsman can hire no other qualified worker to accept this new wage, he is faced with

the alternative of selling out his business or resuming work himself. In the latter case the reward for his labor will be precisely the 30-cent-per-hour wage that the hired man refused.

In the depression of 1920 the pay-roll share of the national income jumped 6 per cent over 1919 (*Recent Social Trends*, p. 230); from 1927 to 1929—a period of boom—it apparently fell 4 per cent; and between 1929 and 1932 it probably increased 5 per cent. It seems likely, therefore, that the pay-roll share—because the wage scale is sluggish—tends to fall as prosperity increases and tends to rise as depression increases.

Let us now suppose that in 1932 all capital had been confiscated to the public and its profits distributed per capita among all the 48 million potential wage earners. In 1929 the national pay roll was 48 billions, but in 1932 the whole national income was 40 billions. Of this, about 24 billions went to the pay roll, perhaps 6 billions to overhead, maintenance, and taxes, and 10 billions to profits. Consequently, even if this 10 billions of profits had been distributed equally among the 48 million potential wage earners it would only have increased their total and hence their average income by 40 per cent. And this income, thus raised from 24 to 34 billions, would still have been only 70 per cent of what they received in wages alone in 1929. It may therefore be easily seen that, for the moment at least, the preservation of wealth is a more vital consideration than its distribution. For that which is not preserved cannot be distributed.

The new or romantic economists deny that labor is a commodity. Believing that 'human welfare is jeop-

ardized by the working of any such 'economic law,' they not only reject it but think 'human welfare is jeopardized' by those who cannot make up their minds to reject it. If our craftsman wants a bench he may buy one, hire somebody to make one, or make one himself. If the bench is a commodity and hence subject to economic laws, why is the labor involved in making it something so radically different? Or is it admitted that labor is a commodity but denied that commodities are affected by economic laws? The truth is that commodities are subject to economic laws and that labor—whether we like it or not—is a commodity. But, this being so, the price or wage of labor is, if not ineluctably determined, at least seriously affected by the hoary principle of supply and demand.

### III

Let us now consider for a moment the situation in the year 1929. It has been alleged that even in that prosperous year there was substantial unemployment. But certainly Mills' figures (*Economic Tendencies*, 1932, p. 531) do not bear this out, for he shows that even in manufacturing—where adverse technological factors are supposedly most active—the decrease in the numbers employed was, as compared with 1923, only .4 per cent. Nor do we need any such meticulous corroboration of a condition so well remembered by all of us; certainly along the north Atlantic seaboard even unskilled labor was not to be had for less than \$5 or even \$6 a day. Yet, because of a relatively low proportionate wage, capital was eager to find labor, and labor, because of the easy living, was

often reluctant. On the whole, however, substantial equilibrium existed between the demand for labor and the supply, with the result that there was a general fluidity of labor as well as of capital. Perhaps the wage earners as a whole were not getting quite their fair share of the national income, but at least each one was earning about what he was worth in proportion to the rest.

If, then, a man was doing a certain kind of work in 1929 and was receiving approximately as many dollars as that work was then worth, this man—or another—doing the same work in 1932, was inevitably doing work worth only half as much. In other words, capital's demand for work in dollars had been cut in two. It will pay 55 or even 60 per cent of its income to wages, but this will be all. To the extent that it is asked to pay more it will, as a matter of self-preservation, refuse to pay anything and begin to hoard.

Taking for granted the existence of a free, capitalistic régime, the old economists predicted that in such a situation all wages would drop approximately 50 per cent and business would proceed as usual. Now, notoriously, this has not occurred, but this is not because the prophecy was wrong. On the contrary, it is because the régime for which the prophecy was made has now largely ceased to exist. As we shall soon see, the régime obtaining in this country in 1932 was only 60 per cent capitalistic, the other 40 per cent being pseudo-socialistic. The events of the last three years seem to indicate quite emphatically that the marriage is not a happy one. No longer to-day is the nation 'half slave and half free'; instead it is 'half subsidized and half free.' For why other-

wise are 10 millions without work? It can only be because the wage to which they are entitled as their share of the national income is being appropriated by others. For cruel though it may be, it is an economic fact that for every man who is to-day receiving his full 1929 dollar wage for the same work done there is another man in the sweat shop or the bread line. Let us examine what categories of employees are enjoying this depression privilege.

The government employees are one class that at once comes to mind. In 1932 there were still over two and a half million of them, and their wage had not, on the average, fallen as much as 10 per cent. Over a million people were still employed by the utility companies (not including railroads), and their wage had not fallen as much as 10 per cent. (The 1932 figures for the 300,000 telephone employees showed a drop of 4.5 per cent.) And there were still about 750,000 railroad employees working at a 10-per-cent reduction.

Members of trade and labor unions, not counting post-office and railroad employees, still numbered over three millions in August 1930. These, being somewhat exposed to the biting air of capitalism, were, in 1932, about half unemployed. The average wage reduction of the rest is not easily figured. Printers took their first cut, of 10 per cent, in November 1932. The Massachusetts textile workers had, up to the summer of 1932, been cut only 12.5 per cent. In the building trades the average cut was then still not over 20 per cent. A hundred and fifty thousand anthracite miners were three-quarters employed without reduction from the 1929 dollar wage, and 80,000

bituminous miners were half employed at a wage reduction of about 20 per cent. In many places the musicians' wage was only off 10 per cent (with over 80 per cent unemployed); on the other hand, the theatrical unions have lately let the bottom fall out, with the result that star actors are now picking up work again—at reductions running up to 90 per cent! Let us say, then, that in 1932 half the union members (counting half time as half a man) were still employed at about 75 per cent of the 1929 dollar wage.

A small but rapidly growing category of workers is engaged on public works. Here it is not the unions so much as the public authorities that dictate wage scales. On November 27, 1932, the City of New York offered jobs at \$4 a day. The wage, based on a \$6 wage in 1929, should have been \$3, or, more precisely—as we shall see—\$2.40. Massachusetts fixed her minimum wage for unskilled labor at 45 cents an hour, whereas the market wage was 30 cents. Laborers on public works in Cambridge, Massachusetts, have been picketed by unemployed because they were working for 30 cents an hour. In this latter case the contractor was doubtless profiting; but is it not almost time that someone did begin to profit again? And, incidentally, is it not fair to add that these workers, who would otherwise have remained unemployed, profited too?

Next come the wage scales of institutions. The number still employed by hospitals, churches, private schools and colleges, museums, institutes, societies, and other eleemosynary organizations must be several million. Certainly many preachers, professors, and trained nurses are still getting al-

most their 1929 dollar wage. I doubt if the average cut here by 1932 exceeded 25 per cent.

Finally, domestic and personal service forms a large category. Here as elsewhere economies have been effected by reducing personnel rather than wages. The friends of the employer are kept on and their wages are kept up; the rest are dismissed.

It is generally agreed that we have about 46 million effective potential wage earners. If we estimate the numbers employed by institutions and in personal service at 5 millions and add to these the other 6 millions, we find that in 1932 about 11 million wage earners were being grossly overpaid. Constituting less than a quarter of the country's wage earners, they were absorbing 39 per cent of the national pay roll.

What does this mean if not that the other 76 per cent had somehow to divide the remaining 61 per cent of the pay roll? And this means that their per-capita share, instead of being half the 1929 dollar wage, was only 40 per cent of it. To the extent that they got more it was through bonuses, subsidies, doles, etc.

Now, compared with the 1929 north-Atlantic-seaboard wage of \$6 a day, this 1932 market wage becomes \$2.40. Had the excess wage of the privileged 24 per cent been eliminated, this \$2.40 would have become \$3. Had this in turn led, as it must have, to employment for all, 19 per cent more work would have been done, and this, by adding to the national income and so to the national pay roll, would have steadily raised the wage toward \$3.47. And this sum, translated into 1929 purchasing power, would become at least \$4.61, and probably—as we

shall see—\$5.20. Back to this point, though no further, we might have pulled ourselves up by our own boot straps.

#### IV

But how does this at all explain unemployment? Why did not the unprivileged 76 per cent meekly share the 61 per cent of the 1932 pay roll, just as everyone had shared the 1929 pay roll? Why, instead, did the bulk of this fund fall to 26 of the remaining 35 million potential wage earners, leaving 9 millions unemployed? Actually, to be sure, no such sharp line existed. Siegfried (*England's Crisis*, 1931, p. 93) says that in England, 'according to the Ministry of Labor, male employment is regular in 66.9 per cent of cases, sufficient in 21.9 per cent, bad in 4.9 per cent, and totally insufficient in only 2 per cent.' And this curve of declination is presumably as true here as there. This, however, does not explain why there was any substantial declination at all; which is awkward, because the phenomenon seems to defy the simplest law of supply and demand. The probability is that this basic law is conditioned, or at least may be hindered, by another law, namely, that just as when wages are abnormally high they tend to fall, so when they are abnormally low they tend to rise. In other words, wages tend to absorb between 50 and 60 per cent of the total income, so that even when the supply of labor is enormous and the demand small the reward of labor tends to remain at 50 per cent or more. But does not this entirely overlook the *argumentum ad hominem*: that an employer will strike the sharpest wage bargain he can, and that the

unemployed will agree to work for any wage, no matter how low, rather than not get any work or any wage at all?

The only explanation that seems at all valid is a double one. First we must bear in mind that the same type of employer who will, when operating a non-profit-making concern, dismiss some of his men in order to keep others at an excessively high wage, will, even when operating a profit-making concern, be inclined to dismiss some of his men in order not to drop them all to a wage that he and his men must both regard as too low. Then labor is not, after all, a commodity? Evidently not. Our profoundest apologies, Mr. Tugwell! And yet, is it not precisely because we believe that it is not a commodity and act on that faith that we have to-day 10 million unemployed?

Complementary to the attitude of the employer is that of the average employee. Here I cannot do better than quote Mr. Leo Wolman:-

'The marked increase in productivity of the post-war period has added to the expectations inherent in democracy and has built up an anticipation of well-being which has been rudely shocked by the sudden breakdown of the sources of prosperity. Increasing well-being and mass education have made wage earners less willing to accept the necessity for lower standards and have caused them to view with bewildered impatience conditions which were thought to be inevitable in earlier years.' (*Recent Social Trends*, 1933, p. 852.)

Rather than humiliate themselves by accepting a wage apparently below the market price many prefer to live off their savings, many more to live off their families or friends. And there are even some who, while they keep one

eye closed, keep the other on the hoped-for dole. In the meantime they believe that America, boundlessly rich and generous, will carry them until they can again procure the wage to which they have become accustomed as of right.

On page 89 of André Siegfried's *England's Crisis* are the words: 'The evil from which England is suffering is that a whole section of the population is overpaid for its service, while the profits on capital are correspondingly diminished. That is the real cause of the trouble.' If you read on a few pages you will see that our trouble is England's trouble too.

## V

In 1925 Jacques Rueff (*Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, December 10) devised an equation, based on English figures for the years 1919 to 1925, which seemed to demonstrate that as the wage scale of employed persons rises in proportion to the cost of living, unemployment also rises—in like proportion. This equation can now be disproved, because if we take 1929 for our index year, a time when demand and supply were in substantial equilibrium and the capitalistic system therefore in full and free operation—we see that whereas the wage scale of employed persons had, by 1932, fallen 41 per cent (4.5 millions 10 per cent, 6.5 millions 25 per cent, and 26 millions 50.5 per cent), our cost of living had only fallen 25 per cent. Rueff's equation would therefore indicate a shortage of labor!

Nevertheless, Rueff's figures and chart are unforgettable; it seems inconceivable that they really indicate nothing at all. Let us therefore try a

variation. When we come to the factor, 'cost of living,' let us think what other factor might, because of its similarity, in normal times run parallel, and yet, in an acute crisis, diverge from it. National income at once occurs, because where the cost of living falls merely on account of a rise in currency value, national income, if in fact constant, will fall in identical proportion.

There is, moreover, another factor which, though following national income very closely, may vary slightly from it. This is the national pay-roll percentage, probably up 5 per cent since 1929. Let us try this variation of Rueff's equation: that 'as the wage scale of employed persons rises in proportion to the *national pay roll*, unemployment also rises—in like proportion.' Thus revised we have:—

$$\frac{\text{wages of employed persons,}}{\text{59% of the 1929 dollar wages}} = \frac{46 \text{ million potential}}{\text{wage earners}}$$

$$\frac{\text{national pay roll, 49.5% of}}{\text{the 1929 national pay roll}} = X \text{ million wage earners employed in 1932}$$

X equals 38.6 millions, or 7,400,000 unemployed. But the American Federation of Labor estimate for 1932 (January 6, 1933) was 10,900,000. How can this discrepancy be explained? Partly by the fact that, even in 1929, when labor supply and demand were in equilibrium, there were about 2 million unemployed—a chronic phenomenon due to temperamental as well as technological causes. Our equation, however, merely indicates the increase since 1929. There still remains a discrepancy of a million and a half, which is probably explained by the fact that the 10.9 million unemployed worked an average of one day in every seven.

Only by respecting, may we hope to

profit by, the trials and errors of the past.

What is the way out? Because we have come later to the dilemma we are coming later to our solution. Russia has risked communism; Italy—and now Germany—has risked dictatorship; England has risked currency depreciation. It is now our turn. What shall we risk? Unless we can face the facts and harness them to our ends they will harness us to theirs.

First of all, last of all, and above all, we must, as in a war, subordinate our individual advantage to the common good. If we cannot, popular government here will go the way it has already gone in Russia and Italy. And we must stop thinking, not only as our pocketbooks suggest, but also as our hearts prompt. Instead we must think—and vote—with our brains.

Therefore let government and transportation wages be cut to at least 50 per cent of 1929 dollar value. Since these wages are 50 per cent of total costs, taxes and fares may then fall 25 per cent. With utility wages correspondingly cut, their rates could be cut about 20 per cent.

Next, let the laws favoring labor monopoly be repealed. True, an individual has no natural rights contrary to the general welfare and hence no right to work for any wage he may wish to accept; but certainly it is against public policy wholly to frustrate this choice, if only because the consequence is too likely to throw him into the bread line. Labor unions may properly promote healthy working

conditions and hours, and may resist exploitation below the market wage. They may also do much to attract labor to those points where the market wage is highest. But the granting of monopoly privileges—whether to labor or capital—is objectionable. That the motives dictating these two grants are, ethically, at opposite poles, is a small consolation, since the injury done is in both cases identical.

Further, it must be explained to directors of institutions that these were not founded chiefly for the benefit of their employees. No more than the corporation exists for the benefit of its executives do the churches exist for the benefit of their pastors, or the hospitals for their nurses. Our various institutions have lately grown to menacing proportions; together they rival in wealth the Church of earlier days. As many as are exempt from taxation have accepted a public responsibility that they must recognize or else be taxed. Many of their directors think they have a public duty to keep wages up; but this not only aggravates unemployment, it also restricts the public service they have undertaken to render.

For the reduction of domestic and private wages no financial pressure can be imposed. Here again friendship is so powerful a factor that only time can make the adjustment. Nevertheless, the appeal to reason should be made here too.

Were the whole of these unearned wages wiped out, the general cost of living (see Massachusetts Commission on the Necessaries of Life—figures for November 1932) would fall from 25 to 33 per cent.

It might be objected that these privileged wage earners can spend

their excess wage as beneficially as would those who are now paying it. But the difficulty is that, in order to transfer this money from its owner to the privileged wage earner, a terrific burden is necessarily imposed on the country's business. The owner gets this money only because his capital or labor has served a useful purpose—as in the case of the craftsman's bench; it is his payment for the economic service that his capital or labor has rendered. Those paying him are doing this voluntarily because they themselves have thereby been benefited. One lends his savings or past labor, the other his time or present labor, and it is only because both add to existing wealth that they are paid for these services.

But the process of transferring this wealth to the pocket of the privileged wage earner injures every owner of property or money. Every cent so paid,—in taxes, in rates for heat, light, telephone, or transportation, in hospital or tuition fees, for carpentry or plumbing,—instead of being a fair contractual return for services rendered, is an involuntary impost. Regardless of whether this transfer—amounting to 15 per cent of our 1932 national pay roll—is ethical or not, it has upset our whole economic structure.

## VI

This paper is called 'A Diagnosis' for the simple reason that it does not seriously undertake to offer more. I think that our experts have failed to agree on a cure largely because they have not first had the patience to complete their diagnosis. I do not claim that unemployment is the country's sole present complaint; surely

the vagaries of the gold dollar with its attendant debt difficulties are quite as fundamental. But a ship in a storm must look equally to her ballast and her canvas, and a delay in readjusting the ballast is no reason for neglecting to shorten sail.

This paper, therefore, is simply a plea that we ought to shorten sail; it does not purport to expound precisely how this may best be done. And my reason is a good one, for just as an otherwise ingenious cure may be ruined by an imperfect diagnosis, so a correct diagnosis may be discredited by being associated with a faulty cure.

Consequently I shall add only one word more. In the fable of the wager between the wind and the sun as to which could get the traveler's coat off, I cannot help seeing an analogy to our predicament. The coat is profits, the wind wages; the harder wages struggle to appropriate the rewards that naturally accrue to capital, the harder capital clings to those rewards. It is thus a wasted effort entailing only mutual irritation and loss. But of what is the sun a symbol—that sun which by beaming brightly induced the capitalist to shed his coat?

Candidly I do not rightly know what this sun is, but I feel that it exists—a power that will induce the capitalist to divest himself of some of his wealth for the good of all. If this is a capitalistic country and if its sensational achievements have been largely due to the free operation of this system, it is also a democratic country dedicated to human welfare. In such a commonwealth excessive riches have no place. I therefore venture to suggest that the confiscation of excess

wealth, to be put in trust for impartial and judicious investment and its income to be generally distributed, is a conception that will gradually gain in favor. If the unnecessarily rich could be assured that the capital so confiscated would not be squandered—by the government or the individual—but would remain capital skillfully invested for profit, I believe that many of them would gladly make the sacrifice.

For surely when each citizen becomes the recipient of a dividend, cut from the profits of the nation's business, his concern for the growth of profits will be aroused. At first he could hardly receive more than a few dollars a year (even one dollar a wage earner would require a billion of capital) but this little might well suffice to initiate him into the mysteries of the capitalist point of view. From that moment he would begin to resent state or monopoly interference with the business that was trying to add to his income; he would begin to resist taxes, rates, and wages that choke. Even if he cannot be intellectually convinced that wages in the long run must depend on the national income, he will at least have a financial interest in the size of his dividend. Let this dividend, modest at first but growing, be his dole—and his only dole. The rest that he gets he must earn.

Any such solution as this is bound to seem contrary to the selfish interests of many, to the 11 million privileged wage earners, to the rich, and to the many million recipients of bonuses, subsidies, and doles. As a remedy therefore it may be chimerical, but, if it is, so also is popular government.

## BOOKS ABROAD

THE PENTAMERONE OF BASILE. *Translated from the Italian of Benedetto Croce by Norman M. Penzer. London: John Lane. 1932. 2 vols. 42 shillings.*

(Sacheverell Sitwell in *The Observer*, London)

THIS book represents one of the most difficult, as it is one of the most delightful, feats of translation ever attempted, and Mr. Penzer is to be congratulated on the unimpaired vitality with which he comes through the ordeal. His critical notes throughout the text, and the appendices at the back, make a really wonderful monument of learning. And, at the end of the two volumes, Professor Stith Thompson has let loose what can only be described as a cataract of information upon the subject of folk tales. It is not the least interesting part of this memorable publication.

The author was a Neapolitan soldier of fortune born in 1575, who died in 1632, and the *Pentamerone* was published a year or two after his death. Apart from this, he seems to have been an indifferent poet, but his fame rests upon the *Pentamerone*, and fame has certainly been protracted in reaching him. Yet this book can be regarded as the first collection of fairy stories ever made in Europe. The reason for the delay is that it has been inaccessible, even to the Italian public, until Croce's translation was published in 1925. Mr. Penzer has worked upon this, and upon the original Neapolitan of Basile, side by side. The result is this first complete and authentic edition into English, for the previous at-

tempt by Burton of the *Thousand and One Nights* was left unfinished at his death and his notes were destroyed and never printed.

For it is no use trying to render Basile and his world of invention into anything but a Neapolitan convention. He was typical of that city, and of the time he lived in. The only other capital to which his varied and adventurous career took him was Mantua, a very congenial place for a person of fantastic and high-flown ideas. We may be certain that he appreciated the luxury of its court, the fine and famous breeds of horses, the race of dwarves in the little apartments specially built for them, and the courtyards and frescoes of Giulio Romano. Mantua was then in the height of its glory; the Gonzaga were not yet ruined, and our own Charles the First had not yet bought the finest of their pictures and carried them away to England. Basile was connected with its court through his sister Adriana, a wonderful singer, whose skill made two successive Dukes of Mantua, Vincenzo and Ferdinando, load herself and all her family, including Basile himself, with estates and honors. All this, and much more, we may learn in Croce's own introduction to the book, which I find I have, so far, forgotten to mention. A little footnote even tells us of the interesting fact that Adriana's daughter, Eleonora, a still more wonderful singer, was admired and loved by John Milton, who knew her in Rome and heard her sing, her mother accompanying her on the zither. Some of

his Italian sonnets refer to her, and he wrote two Latin epigrams '*Ad Leonoram Romae canentem.*'

But we must come back to Naples. It was at that time, as it always has been, and always will be, one of the greatest centres of popular vitality in the world. The golden age of its music was then dawning; and this music was the true echo of its exuberance and energy. Naples was not without great artists; Bernini was born there in those years, and it had its forgotten but once world-famous poets, such as Marini. It is tempting to add, here, a footnote of one's own, and to ask if we are never to be allowed an edition of his *Adone* with the original drawings made to illustrate it by Poussin, many of which are still preserved, unpublished, in the Royal Library at Windsor. Marini was the admired model of Basile in his poems, and even in these fairy tales he shows himself to be part and parcel of the literary movement headed by Marini. But he grafted this peculiar style, loaded with conceit, upon the extraordinary and intricate Neapolitan dialect; that is why he has never before been properly translated into English, and why it has been necessary, even for the Italians, to have his tales translated for them into the language they can understand.

WHY did Basile write in Neapolitan? This is a point of some interest in the history of taste. Tuscan, the *lingua Toscana* of the Elizabethans, had been the language of polite society for a couple of generations, and the Italians of the south were tired of it. Florence was a dying city; Naples was growing and growing. The Neapolitan dialect, with its enormous vocabulary,

must have seemed tempting beside the used and exploited Tuscan. There is, also, the realist movement in painting to be taken into account. The painter, Caravaggio, had been responsible, just at this time, for a revolution in taste. All these factors made the live, contemporary dialect of the south a more exciting medium of expression than the frayed, classical Tuscan. Basile wanted to write down the tales that he had heard. Is it any wonder that he wrote in the language of Naples? Spanish hyperbole, the extravagance of the south, lifts the tales out of the slum atmosphere they would have possessed if they had dealt only in terms of the crowded streets of Naples, and the result of this is something curious and unique in literature.

The stories might be described as being much traveled in character. They are not the quiet bucolics of a countryside, but tales of fantastic adventure, many of them with marked Oriental characteristics. The origin, the starting point of these stories is a study of fascinating interest, and under the expert guidance of Mr. Penzer and Professor Stith Thompson there is hardly a country in the world that does not contain some clue or parallel to one or other of the tales. All of this is mysterious beyond belief. In the end, the solution to the question seems generally to be India. Perhaps it is the true theory that lays the credit for the invention of these stories to the Buddhist monasteries of ancient India. These tales were the children of monotony. They were born in monastic solitude, and radiating from there they passed through the even greater monotonies of desert travel and long sea voyage. They increased again, by the way, and arrived at Basile already

centuries old and enriched with the details of a myriad imaginations.

They achieved finality in his hands; and of all the fairy stories ever written none has more authentic magic than his. They represent an extraordinary mixture fused into a complete personality. The style of hyperbole is somehow well suited to the medium. It gets the Oriental wildness and improbability that is essential. Nightfall is described as 'waiting till the sun, like a Genoese lady, had veiled her face with black silk.' This sort of thing would be tiresome in ordinary prose, but it is part of the actual thing itself in a fairy tale. Many of the similes are even more elaborate and farfetched than this. And yet, in its curious way, the effect is rapid and vital. If it is like anything else at all, the prose of Basile is comparable to etchings by Jacques Callot. Those who like Callot must buy Basile; and may the stories soon be published in a cheap edition! It would be delightful to have them in 'Everyman.'

L'AMOUR DU PROCHAIN. By Jacques Chardonne. Paris: Bernard Grasset. 1933.

(Jacques de Lacretelle in the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, Paris)

WHY this title? Undoubtedly because all the observations set down in this work really come from the author's emotional depths. Each thought, whether it concerns society or man, art or love, is born of the heart. But, despite the fact that the book is made up of ideas, it is not a disjointed collection of them. No clichés, few literary formulas, no appeal to irony; simply an informal reverie on the subject of human

happiness. Let me change the title and call it *The Diary of the Better Hours*.

It might seem that this manner of presenting problems would give an impression of faint-heartedness. The author recognizes this possibility and defends himself. 'To be true,' he writes, 'avoid excess. It is almost like refusing to say anything at all. Nothing strikes us, unless amplified to the point of error.' Let him be reassured. To be able to see a halo in broad daylight is to see better than others.

Occasionally the author of *Épitabile* adds a little footnote. Here is one that is both a confession and a sign of power: 'To-day I know that I could not describe the character of a man unless he is in contact with a woman in marriage.' There is also a beautiful passage on the working class, from which humanity, when it wishes to renew itself, 'will demand new strength as from a dream of youth.' There is an epic inspiration here that reminds us of Renan's beautiful reflections on the world.

The last pages of the book deal with capitalism and with the new régime in Russia. Confronted by ill-defined, ill-tested problems, M. Chardonne is carried away by his doctrine of the heart into extremes of underestimation and enthusiasm. We certainly have heard better-motivated arguments for and against each system. But we praise M. Chardonne for having shown once more that, in everything, love of one's neighbor leads to sincere and unprejudiced examination.

Having finished the book, I was reminded of this saying by Grimm: 'It is the mind that thinks, the heart only feels; but when the mind thinks well, it is thinking of what it feels.'

# LETTERS AND THE ARTS

## TOLSTOI'S DAUGHTER ATTACKS BOLSHEVISM

AFTER working for twelve years with the Soviet Government, the daughter of Leo Tolstoi has written an open letter to the Russian émigré journal, *Vozrozhdenie*, attacking the Communist régime in Russia. Her message was at once reproduced in full in François Coty's superpatriotic *Figaro*, with an approving introduction by General A. Niessel. Here is what she has to say:

'When the Tsarist government condemned several revolutionists to death in 1908 a loud cry burst from my father's lips, "I cannot keep silent," and the Russian people greeted this unique protest against the death sentence with sympathy. Now, when a bloody struggle is going on in the northern Caucasus, when thousands of people are being shot and exiled every day, I feel, since my father is no longer alive, that it is my duty to raise my voice against these crimes, all the more so because I have worked with the Soviet Government for twelve years and the terror has unrolled before my eyes.

'The world keeps silent. Millions of people have been driven from their homes and have died in the prisons and concentration camps of northern Russia. Thousands have been shot. The Bolsheviks began with their class enemies, the clergy, the faithful, scholars, and professors. Now it is the workers' and peasants' turn, and the world still keeps silent. For fifteen years people have been suffering from slavery, famine, and cold. The Bolshevik Government pillages the peasant, seizes grain and other food-stuffs and sends them abroad because it needs foreign money, not only to buy machinery but also for Bolshevik world propaganda. If the peasants protest, if they hide the grain that their hungry families need, they are

dealt with in a summary fashion: they are shot.

'The Russian people has not got the strength to suffer any more. Here and there revolts are breaking out, in factories, shops, isolated villages, and whole townships. Hungry peasants are fleeing by the thousands from the Ukraine, where death from starvation threatens them, abandoning their houses and farms. And what does the Soviet Government do?

'It issues decrees expelling hundreds of thousands of people from Moscow, a third of the population, and it reduces the rebellious peasants to silence by shooting or exiling them. Russia has not seen such horrors since the time of Ivan the Terrible. Now that the Kuban Cossacks have risen up in southern Russia, Soviet power has organized repressive measures of unheard-of ferocity against the population. Whole families of Cossacks have been shot and forty-five thousand men, women, and children have been sent by Stalin's orders to certain death in Siberia.

'Is the world going to continue its silence? Are governments going to conclude agreements remorselessly with the Bolshevik assassins, thus consolidating the position of the latter and running the risk of ruining their own countries? Will the League of Nations continue to sit in peaceful judgment over the affairs of the whole world with the representatives of a power whose chief method of government is bloody terror? Are idealistic writers like Romain Rolland, who had such a clear comprehension of the two great pacifist spirits of our time, Gandhi and Tolstoi, are men like Barbusse and Bernard Shaw going to continue to sing the praises of the socialist paradise? In doing so they bear moral responsibility for extending the Bolshevik epidemic that threatens the universe with destruction and ruin. Do men still believe that the

bloody dictatorship of a group of people who are trying to destroy world civilization, religion, and morality deserves the name of socialism?

'Who is going to cry out again in the world, "I cannot keep silent"? Where are you, champions of love, truth, and fraternity among men? Where are you, Christians, real socialists, pacifists, writers, statesmen? Why do you keep silent? Do you need still more proof, testimony, witnesses, figures? Do you not hear the cry for help? Or perhaps you think that human happiness can be hastened by submitting a whole people to violence, murder, and the loss of liberty.

'My appeal is not addressed to those whose sympathy for the Bolsheviks has been purchased by money wrung from the Russian people. I turn to all those who still believe in fraternity and equality among men, to religious people, real socialists, writers, politicians, women, and mothers. Open your eyes, unite in protest against the executioners of a nation of a hundred and sixty million souls.'

#### THE NEW BOOK OF THE LATEST IMMORTAL

PIERRE BENOIT'S admission to the French Academy should not be surprising in view of the fact that his best known book, *L'Atlantide*, won the Academy's annual fiction prize in 1919. This fanciful tale was told with unusual grace and imagination, but it lent itself so naturally to the films that it appeared here under the characteristic title of *Missing Husbands* and in a form that suggested Mr. Hearst's *American Weekly* rather than the immortal Academy. Benoit's reputation has also suffered greatly in the United States by the large sale of *Le Lac Salé*, a wretchedly constructed melodrama describing the early days of the Mormons in Utah. Yet even here Benoit's rare exactitude of language disarmed criticism and his almost hypnotic power of creating a mood asserted itself. And in *Mademoiselle de la Ferié*

he interrupted the succession of potboiler romances that had carried him to the heights of success in *L'Atlantide* and *Königsmark*.

In his new quality of academician Benoit has again renounced the far-fetched themes his public have demanded and have almost always received. His latest book, *L'Île Verte*, is the simple story of a little Jewish taxidermist who establishes himself on a barren island in the Gironde to devote his life to the birds that abound there. It is true that the mysterious descriptions of the inhabitants continually lead the reader to expect that the most sinister events will grow out of the uncanny understanding between Étienne Ruiz (who might better have been called François) and his web-footed protégés. But the birds do nothing more desperate than flock around the island 'like a great ring of Saturn.' In fact, nobody does anything very exciting, though all the characters except the villain come to tragic ends. Benoit's experiment of painting with subdued colors is unexpectedly successful, and the strange *ménage* over the taxidermy shop is portrayed with faithfulness and charm. Moreover, his virtuosity is nowhere more astounding than in his telling use of words to create a pervading atmosphere of mystery and apprehension. But in the long run the suspicion gains on the reader that he has been the victim of a false alarm.

#### MEYERHOLD'S NEW PRODUCTION

EVEN the local press does not approve of the latest offering in Meyerhold's Theatre of Revolution in Moscow. Lotte Schwarz, writing in the *Moskauer Rundschau*, describes her impressions of the first performance of *Entrance*, in which Stanislavski's foremost rival and political and æsthetic antithesis reverts to some of the errors that Communist artists used to commit in their first flush of revolutionary enthusiasm. To judge from Comrade

Schwarz's criticism, which we translate in full, Meyerhold has not kept pace with the younger generation of Russian writers, who are now learning subjective psychology from Dostoievski, having already learned from Tolstoi the objective point of view that was so much in vogue when Meyerhold began building up his reputation:—

'In a long article inspired by the tenth anniversary of the Moscow Theatre of Revolution Miss Babanova, a pupil of Meyerhold's and the best actress in that active young group, says among other things: "To achieve a sharp political delineation of each character, to act as a defending or prosecuting attorney for each part, and to divide the audience into friends and foes—those were then our tasks. A purely tendentious play was our ideal. That required appropriate methods—sharp, precise outlines without any of that psychological refinement or attenuation that might possibly deceive the audience as to the intentions of the actors." And in another place she says: "Such a 'rationalistic departure' was at one time a wholly natural protest against the idolizing of the actor's notorious 'inner self.' But we overvalued the one and undervalued the other. . . . In our infatuation with the new methods of presentation we neglected an uncommonly important aspect of stage-craft—the training of our psychological apparatus. We have criminally underestimated the tremendous power that our mental apparatus is in a position to exercise."

'Since the time to which this article refers many years have passed. All kinds of experiments have followed the pure propaganda pieces in Meyerhold's theatre; Ostrovski, Gogol, and even the psychologizing Olesha have appeared on this stage. And yet when this theatre brings a new experiment before the public to-day one must refer back to that distant time to understand what Meyerhold is aiming at and why his intentions miscarry.

'Meyerhold tries to work with what he considers the simplest means. That these simplest means are in reality highly refined, that out of the negation of overemotional psychology and traditional theatricalism he has created something close to a mannerism, is not the decisive point here. Even this new manner might serve to express real life, to arouse us and lift us out of ourselves. But it leaves us cold—and thus misses the chief meaning and aim of all theatrical art. Why? Miss Babanova has explained—they have forgotten to train their psychological apparatus. Despite the clever construction of the theatre and the inclusion of the audience in the play, the happenings on the stage remain remote and superficial. Meyerhold does not provide, as he would like to do, a mobile intellectual framework up which the emotions of the audience can climb, stimulated by sight and sound. His mechanism lacks driving force; the emotion of the audience is replaced by soulless, uninspired pathos.

'All this is frankly stated, perhaps too frankly. Meyerhold is doubtless one of the very great performers and producers of the present-day theatre, but for this very reason there can be no harm in analyzing the potentialities and achievements of each of his new experiments from the point of view of the spectator. In any case, his new production—a piece called *Entrance* by a young writer by the name of German—brings out two things clearly: even Meyerhold cannot afford to put on a poor play; and, secondly, even the best stage management cannot make up for poor acting.

'Young German's play is a dramatized novel. An idealistic German professor is made political-minded by somewhat rigorous means. The maltreatment of children in China, the misery of the unemployed and the police atrocities in the democratic West finally cause this dreamer and sentimentalist to enter the Soviet Union as a specialist. It is interesting to note how a young writer pictures

a German technical professor, a well-known designer of machines. The so-called transformation is brought about exclusively by sentiment. Intelligence, knowledge, and logic are excluded as means of forming an opinion. What German and Meyerhold have jointly produced springs entirely from themselves. For the play has but slight connection with the capitalistic East and the capitalistic West as they really are and with the struggles and sufferings of mankind and the way these are reflected in the mind of the individual. The material is drawn from poor newspaper articles and is not viewed realistically.

'The professor, who seems more like an overwrought musician, declaims his part with the greatest pathos, and not till the last few minutes of the play, when he is finally able to rejoice over his life, does he become a human being. The Chinese exploiter, the European supercapitalist, the engineer who thinks only of his own profit, the families of the unemployed, and all the others—they are all *nearly* real, but this "nearly" means that they are actually further away than if they were characters in a fairy tale. The only really good figure in the play is that of the unemployed boyhood friend of the professor, whose appalling misery is deeply moving. In him the complete attrition of the spirit, the

hopelessness and blind despair of the individual who can no longer find a point of support either inside or outside himself becomes impressively clear. The scene in which this former architect, now a vendor of pornographic picture postcards drunk with alcohol and pain, holds his great dialogue with the plaster bust of Goethe is not only the high point of the play but comes close to being the best sort of dramatic art.

'Nor is this production lacking in other brilliant ideas. At the moment when, in the foreground, the police are leading two Chinese coolies out of the hotel corridor to their death, in the back part of the cleverly divided stage some foreigners are entertaining the elegant Misses Sylvester. Storms of applause for a meretricious violin solo accompany the moving exit of the enslaved rebels. But these details do not save the production, and even the very original scene in the coffeehouse, where a group of boyhood friends meet again after ten years in which life has treated them very badly, remains ineffective in the end. In spite of *Reviser* and Olesha the theatre has not progressed since its production of *Roar Cbina*. But what was highly artistic and very effective seven years ago leaves us cold to-day. We are waiting for Meyerhold to give us a new decisive word, and new action.'

# AS OTHERS SEE US

## JESUS AND TECHNOCRACY

**W**RITING from Duluth, Minnesota, to the radical *Tage-Buch* of Berlin, two of whose editors have been refused passports by Hitler, Rudolf Hildebrand comments as follows concerning the Technocracy craze in America:

Jesus has been represented in every form. Why shouldn't he have been a Technocrat, too? It is an old American custom to post the subject of next Sunday's sermon on the church door or on a signboard before the church, and the latest subject is Technocracy. 'What Would Jesus Say about Technocracy?' 'Technocracy and the Sermon on the Mount.' Or simply, 'Next Sunday at Ten-Thirty: Technocracy.' The learned doctor of theology of the First Methodist Church announces: 'Does Technocracy Lead to Communism?' The answer seems to be rather mystical—on the one hand yes, but on the other hand no.

What do the Technocrats themselves say? They say no, that Technocracy will save us from communism. They say the collapse of capitalism is inevitable. No human measures can save it. We have this alternative in establishing the inevitable new order—either Technocracy or communism. At any rate that is what *Common Sense*, the new official Technocratic periodical, has stated.

The *Daily Worker*, organ of the Communist Party, says that Technocracy is a fallacy, and that it contains two outstanding defects. It will not expropriate private property and it believes that a fundamentally new social order can be established by peaceful means. Let me confess in all modesty that this is over my head.

In 1917 capitalism in Russia had not

collapsed. Rather was it in its first stage of development. Its best possibilities of profit were in the future. But these possibilities were suddenly removed by force. But where nothing exists, nothing can be removed, and that is the difference between the Russia of 1917 and the America of 1933. Henry Ford is not making any more profit, though he still hopes to, for he is an innocent child as well as an able mechanic and financier. But other industrialists with more highly developed brains have given up hoping. The number of the hopeless is increasing. More and more people are recognizing that no more profit can be made under the existing order, that capitalism has lived out its day. Private property is becoming more and more a source of loss and an unbearable burden. Many rich people are in trouble, and the pressure on them is increasing all the time. They cannot maintain their beautiful country houses. They cannot pay salaries. Many still have credit and some still have hope, but how long will these last? Sell their property? But who would buy? Everybody is in the same boat. The only solution is to have the whole burden taken over by the state. Yes, quite gradually and peacefully. Why people burden themselves with debts to maintain armies and navies to defend themselves and why they indulge in bloody warfare passes my understanding.

Of course, human folly has always surpassed my understanding and large-scale murder is still conceivable, but apparently that stage has not yet been reached. The fact that capitalism is collapsing is written all over the U. S. A. Here in America the bacilli of capitalism developed as a pure culture, unaffected by the numerous factors on which the depression can be blamed elsewhere. American capitalism has no alibis. There is no fundamental class distinction in respect to birth or

education. America has never lost a war and does not groan under any national debt. Yet millions of people are starving and freezing in the midst of the richest plenty. They lack necessities, although the possibility exists to make life from the material standpoint easy and pleasant for everybody.

My own modest prophecy for the United States runs as follows. Capitalism is going to pieces of its own accord. Human activity cannot hasten or retard its end. The change will occur quite peacefully because people will see in time that it is inevitable. After the capitalist order has been done away with only a communist order is possible in the light of existing technological development, and it will be an order similar in all essential points to the present system in Russia. But in describing this order such words as 'communism,' and 'Soviet' will be carefully avoided.

Perhaps 'Technocracy' is the word of the future, for, though it has just appeared, it has spread at an unprecedented rate. It really seems to be the word of salvation, the perfect word for which the American spirit has yearned. A worker is fired if he says in the factory that Jesus was a Communist, but now we hear it said in holy places that Jesus was a Technocrat.

#### A FRENCHMAN ON AMERICAN COOKING

**W**RITING in *Le Figaro* on his return from the United States, P. J. Charliat has some hard words to say about American cooking:—

American cooking is so unsavory that the very establishments that prepare and distribute food also sell pepsin and aspirin in elegant, discreet boxes. Such cooking stands in contradiction to the civilizing effort that exists throughout the country. It cannot be reconciled with the immense enthusiasm the whole nation has toward individual betterment. Public education

and instruction have given every Yankee the means of becoming a free man, a gentleman, but they have not taught him to despise the detestable art of canning and freezing food.

The price of food in shops and restaurants is too low over there. Unless he is training for something the average American spends nothing on his food. Billions of dollars might circulate to the great benefit of national economy if people would only learn how to eat. America is the country of undernourishment, especially as far as women are concerned. Finally, on the eve of the repeal of Prohibition, gastronomy is the best defense against drunkenness. Alcoholism is the sickness of badly nourished people. It is a shocking situation, contrary to nature, which has been so generous to the men who were bold enough to establish themselves on the other side of the Atlantic. In many parts of the United States the earth pours forth wealth. Although there are a hundred and twenty-five million mouths to feed, wheat, corn, and oats are overabundant. The prairies of the West and Middle West nourish about two hundred million head of grazing animals. Anyone who has not crossed the Atlantic can have no idea of the excellence of the milk and cream. And the goddess of fruit is no less generous than the goddess of grain in the New World. Besides all our European fruits, there are also savory, delightful tropical products that are distributed by railway a few days after they have been picked. Add to this sugar cane, cocoa, spices, and you have everything at hand. If Brillat-Savarin were to survey the statistics he would think he was reading the inventory of paradise on earth. Although everything that the creator provides is so good, it all degenerates in the hands of the industrialist, whether he is a meat packer, a canner, or a grocer.

Why is this? There are many reasons. Above all there is tradition, which is stronger in the United States than in many countries. Individuals are crushed

by numbers, and newcomers have a very clear feeling of inferiority in relation to the earlier occupants of the country. Then there is the tyranny of business. On paper it is infinitely more profitable to butcher the products of the prairies in Chicago, Kansas City, and Omaha with perfect machinery than it is to send interminable trains to all the big urban centres loaded with animals making the most mournful noises, to the great distress of sensitive spirits, and then slaughter them in *abattoirs* in each city so that their bloody quarters can be distributed while the meat is still fresh.

Obviously it is much simpler to load trains with neat cases filled with cans of meat with enticing labels, pretty bottles of concentrated meat extract, or pots of gelatin. It is even much more practical to can vegetables on the spot than it is to distribute fresh vegetables.

Too much rationalization has made the average American lose his sense of alimentary æsthetics. Is the disease incurable? No. If the word 'impossible' is not French, the word 'incurable' is not American. The end of Prohibition may mark the beginning of a new era if we can persuade our transatlantic friends that our bottles of wine are not instruments on which to play solos but that they are part of that harmonious symphony known as the table.

#### DICTIONSHIP AHEAD

**T**HE *New English Weekly*, which was astute enough to recognize the potentialities of Technocracy six weeks ahead of any American publication, now prophesies that dictatorship is just around the corner in the United States. Its editor, A. R. Orage, believes that England is in better shape than America because Major C. H. Douglas's theories of social credit are better known there and can be applied in the event of an emergency:—

Not only are there no economic forces now at work in America to avert a crisis, but, as far as we can see, there are no positive plans for dealing with it when it is precipitated other than crude force alone. In our own country, similarly headed for catastrophe, we have at least the satisfaction of knowing that there is another string to our bow. A considerable number of influential people among us are fully convinced that, if the worst comes to the worst, as they would put it, there is always the policy of national dividends to fall back upon. But the principles of social credit are too little known in America to be available for use at short notice; and both America's statesmen and their advisers are too conservative and, let us say, too stupid, to be able to grasp them merely on the spur of necessity. Not only, therefore, is it probable that virtual dictatorship will come into being, but it is equally probable that there will be no happy end to it. The monetary monopolists of America are now in complete control of the nation, and so long as its statesmen and thinkers are prepared to accept the voice of Wall Street as the voice of God they must endure the penalties of a stringent, ignorant, and heartless receivership. It is a spectacle, the humane world will allow, of the very paradox of tragedy. The most enterprising, inventive, and hard-working nation the earth has ever known, with resources within its absolute control capable of enabling its people to live like a race of emperors, with no enemies, actual or potential, to cause it the least fear, compelled, as if by fate, but, in fact, by the stupidity of the many and the cupidity of the few, to suffer as if the nation were an Asiatic horde of barbarians smitten with pestilence and famine. A dozen men in the key positions of American government who had mastered the not very recondite principles of financial democracy could in a very few weeks create the new order of society out of the break-up and chaos of the old. But, alas, there are not a dozen; there is not one.

## THE GUIDE POST

(Continued)

through the eyes of a reporter on *El Sol*, the leading Republican daily in Madrid. He shows us that the agrarian reforms are actually succeeding in breaking up the big estates and in irritating the landlords as well as gratifying the peasants.

WITHIN the past few months France has shown increasing symptoms of discontent, notably on the part of the taxpayers. Eugène Dabit introduces us to a still more dissatisfied element in the population—the industrial proletariat of Belleville, in the northeastern quarter of Paris. He describes the daily lives of these people, their pleasures, their dwellings, their state of mind. Descriptions of the Latin Quarter, the Champs-Élysées, and the grand boulevards are familiar enough; here is another Paris, one whose traditions go back to the Commune of 1871.

MOHAMMED ASAD, who, we are firmly convinced, is our old friend, Leopold Weiss, under another name, has left his beloved Arabian Desert and gone to India. In 'Himalayan Holiday' he describes a beautiful dancing girl from Kulu in the Himalayan foothills whom he met in Lahore at a time when the plain country of India was depressing him more and more. He therefore set out for the town where she was born, a little mountain village that is now completely isolated from the world. There he penetrated a Hindu temple, from which unbelievers are rigidly excluded, and witnessed one of the most familiar and pathetic of Indian religious rites.

THE Oxford Union Society, a debating club in which many of the foremost British statesmen lisped their first oratorical numbers, has horrified the patriotic press and public by voting overwhelmingly against fighting to defend king and country. We print a general description

of what happened from the Conservative *Week-end Review* but there are several more items that should be added. The Mayor of Oxford was so mortified by the proceeding that he broke into tears. Cambridge was urged to show its displeasure by refusing to row the annual boat race, and finally a group of Sir Oswald Mosley's parlor Fascists entered the Union the next week *en masse*, tore out the page recording the vote from the society's official minutes, and marched away with it, without encountering any resistance. From the *New Statesman and Nation* we reprint an article by the president of the Union explaining the vote as part of the general swing to the left that has occurred in England during the last few years.

HAVING PRINTED quite a number of unorthodox articles on economics,—including Howard Scott's definition of the aims and methods of Technocracy,—we present this month an orthodox interpretation of unemployment so completely in line with the views of the classical economists, John Stuart Mill and Alfred Marshall, as to seem just as novel as Scott himself in this day and age. The author, Edward Motley Pickman, is a former member of the History Department at Harvard.

WILLIAM H. SMYTH of Fernwald, Berkeley, California, writes us to claim that he coined the word 'technocracy' in 1919. He has written and published a pamphlet on the subject which we believe he will be glad to send to anyone who may be interested. Here is the way he defines technocracy himself: 'Technocracy is a proposed new system and philosophy of government. It implies scientific organization of national energy and resources, coöordinating industrial democracy to effect the will of the people. This is the concept and philosophy of government that I originated and for which I coined and defined the word "technocracy."'

# WAR AND PEACE

ARMAMENTS do not safeguard peace, but are a direct menace to it, in that they act as a challenge to the opponent. The unswerving will to peace of a disarmed nation is a moral weapon more powerful than the strongest army. We condemn war as the most horrible and senseless of all crimes, and with it all preparations for war; we consider it our duty both to our nation and to humanity to prevent the next war, which is threatening; it is our passionate desire to fulfill this duty to the utmost. Through the fault of the imperialists the establishment of world peace is moving far too slowly; it must not receive a setback through the taking up of arms in Germany. We do not want an empty national policy of prestige, but one that will safeguard humanity.

—*Manifesto of Revolutionary Pacifists of Germany.*

Let us wipe socialism out of Europe, with machine guns if need be.—*Franz Von Papen, Vice Chancellor of Germany.*

Japan at the back of England in the Far East was a force against Bolshevism in China and revolutionary nationalism in India. We relinquished that force for the phantom of American friendship and have since watched American interests fostering a spirit of disturbance in China which, though latterly most definitely directed against the Japanese, hits ourselves almost, perhaps quite, as hard. Deprived of our moral support, Japan sees nothing but encouragement coming from the West for intrigues and plots of ambitious Chinese nationalists, mostly bred in American universities.—*Saturday Review, London Conservative Weekly.*

It would be a mistaken idea to draw the conclusion that the growing contradictions among the imperialists, particularly between Japan and the U. S. A., make it impossible for them to unite in a common attack against the Soviet Union. On the contrary, it is at the expense of the Soviet Union and the Chinese people that they seek a way out of the deepening economic crisis.—*Appeal of the Pan-Pacific Trade-Union Secretariat.*

I ask the honorable delegates present not to think only of the Chinese soldiers who will lose their lives in the fighting we cannot stop. I ask them to think also of the interests of their own countries, of their own peoples, and of the world at large. War, grim and cruel, is breaking out.—*Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo, member of Chinese delegation to the League of Nations.*

American Democrats would like nothing better than to entangle England in some kind of engagement to oppose Japan in her work of civilization.—*A. A. B., regular contributor to the 'Evening Standard,' London Conservative Daily.*

If the antagonisms of the Great Powers paralyze the League of Nations, if the leadership of the middle classes falls to an increasing extent into the hands of Fascist groups, it is perfectly clear that only the power of the workers can avert the world catastrophe that otherwise must inevitably visit humanity and destroy millions of young people once again.—*Emile Vandervelde, President of the Labor and Socialist International.*

Perhaps a just peace is at last approaching. Perhaps Hitler's victory marks the arrival of equilibrium, which in order to establish itself always requires some violent upheaval.—*'Il Tevere,' Rome Fascist Daily.*

We are marching to war behind banners of peace.—*Alexandre Millerand, former President of France.*

The seventeen expeditions undertaken by the Navy during the past two years were all errands of mercy . . . Another curious phenomenon was that during the past fifteen years there has been an international agitation against the British Navy. But of all the forms of force that Providence put into the hands of a country, the most merciful was the Navy . . . The Navy was incapable of offense in what might be called an offensive manner.—*Captain Bernard Acworth, D.S.O., R.N., naval correspondent to the 'Morning Post.'*